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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

VOL. I.

HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND.

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DAVID HUME ESQ.

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND,

FROM THE

INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR

TO

The REVOLUTION in 1688.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

By DAVID HUME, Esq;

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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAP. I.

The Britons,——Romans,——Saxons,——the Heptarchy.——The Kingdom of Kent——of Northumberland——of East-Anglia——of Mercia——of Essex——of Sussex——of Wessex.

The BRITONS.

CHAP. I.

THE curiosity, entertained by all civilized nations, of enquiring into the exploits and adventures of their ancestors, commonly excites a regret that the history of remote ages should always be so much involved in obscurity, uncertainty, and contradiction. Ingenious men, possessed of leisure, are apt to push their researches beyond the period, in which literary monuments are framed or preserved; without reflecting, that the history of past events is immediately lost or disfigured, when intrusted to memory and oral tradition, and that the adventures of barbarous nations, even if they were recorded,

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corded, could afford little or no entertainment to men born in a more cultivated age. The convulsions of a civilized state usually compose the most instructive and most interesting part of its history; but the sudden, violent, and unprepared revolutions, incident to Barbarians, are so much guided by caprice, and terminate so often in cruelty, that they disgust us by the uniformity of their appearance; and it is rather fortunate for letters that they are buried in silence and oblivion. The only certain means, by which nations can indulge their curiosity in researches concerning their remote origin, is to consider the language, manners, and customs of their ancestors, and to compare them with those of the neighbouring nations. The fables, which are commonly employed to supply the place of true history, ought entirely to be disregarded; or if any exception be admitted to this general rule, it can only be in favour of the ancient Grecian fictions, which are so celebrated and so agreeable, that they will ever be the objects of the attention of mankind. Neglecting, therefore, all traditions or rather tales concerning the more early history of Britain, we shall only consider the state of the inhabitants, as it appeared to the Romans on their invasion of this country: We shall briefly run over the events, which attended the conquest made by that empire, as belonging more to Roman than British story: We shall hasten through the obscure and uninteresting period of Saxon annals: And shall reserve a more full narration for those times, when the truth is both so well ascertained and so complete as to promise entertainment and instruction to the reader.

All ancient writers agree in representing the first inhabitants of Britain as a tribe of the Gauls or Celtæ, who peopled that island from the neighbouring continent. Their language was the same, their manners, their government, their superstition; varied only by those small differences, which time or a communication with the bordering

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tiering nations muſt neceſſarily introduce. The inhabitants of Gaul, eſpecially in thoſe parts which lye contiguous to Italy, had acquired, from a commerce with their ſouthern neighbours, ſome refinement in the arts, which gradually diffuſed themſelves northwards, and ſpread but a very faint light over this iſland. The Greek and Roman navigators or merchants (for there were ſcarcely any other travellers in thoſe ages) brought back the moſt ſhocking accounts of the ferocity of the people, which they magnified, as uſual, in order to excite the admiration of their countrymen. The ſouth-eaſt parts, however, of Britain had already, before the age of Cæſar, made the firſt and moſt requiſite ſtep towards a civil ſettlement; and the Britons, by tillage and agriculture, had there encreaſed to a great multitude [a]. The other inhabitants of the iſland ſtill maintained themſelves by paſture: They were clothed with ſkins of beaſts: They dwelt in huts, which they reared in the foreſts and marſhes, with which the country was covered: They ſhifted eaſily their habitation, when actuated either by the hopes of plunder or the fear of an enemy: The convenience of feeding their cattle was even a ſufficient motive for removing their ſeats: And as they were ignorant of all the refinements of life, their wants and their poſſeſſions were equally ſcanty and limited.

THE Britons were divided into many ſmall nations or tribes; and being a military people, whoſe ſole property was their arms and their cattle, it was impoſſible, after they had acquired a reliſh of liberty, for their princes or chieftains to eſtabliſh any deſpotic authority over them. Their governments, though monarchical, [b] were free, as well as thoſe of all the Celtic nations; and the common people ſeem even to have enjoyed more liberty among them [c], than among the nations of Gaul [d], from whom

[a] Cæſar, lib. 4. [b] Diod. Sic. lib. 4. Mela, lib. 3. cap. 6. Strabo, lib. 4. [c] Dion Caſſius, lib. 75. [d] Cæſar, lib. 6.

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they were deſcended. Each ſtate was divided into factions within itſelf [e]: It was agitated with jealouſy or animoſity againſt the neighbouring ſtates: And while the arts of peace were yet unknown, wars were the chief occupation, and formed the chief object of ambition, among the people.

THE religion of the Britons was one of the moſt conſiderable parts of their government; and the Druids, who were their prieſts, poſſeſſed great authority among them. Beſides miniſtering at the altar, and directing all religious duties, they preſided over the education of youth; they enjoyed an immunity from wars and taxes; they poſſeſſed both the civil and criminal juriſdiction; they decided all controverſies among ſtates as well as among private perſons, and whoever refuſed to ſubmit to their decree was expoſed to the moſt ſevere penalties. The ſentence of excommunication was denounced againſt him: He was forbid acceſs to the ſacrifices or public worſhip: He was debarred all intercourſe with his fellow-citizens, even in the common affairs of life: His company was univerſally ſhunned, as profane and dangerous: He was refuſed the protection of law [f]: And death itſelf became to him an acceptable relief from the miſery and infamy to which he was expoſed. Thus, the bands of government, which were naturally looſe among that rude and turbulent people, were happily corroborated by the terrors of their ſuperſtition.

NO ſpecies of ſuperſtition was ever more terrible than that of the Druids. Beſides the ſevere penalties, which it was in the power of the eccleſiaſtics to inflict in this world, they inculcated the eternal tranſmigration of ſouls; and thereby extended their authority as far as the fears of their timorous votaries. They practiſed their rites in dark groves or other ſecret receſſes [g]; and in order to throw a

[e] Tacit. Agr. [f] Cæſar, lib. 6. Strabo, lib. 4. [g] Plin. lib. 12. cap 1.

greater

greater myſtery over their religion, they communicated their doctrines only to the initiated, and ſtrictly forbad the committing of them to writing; leſt they ſhould at any time be expoſed to the examination of the profane vulgar. Human ſacrifices were practiſed among them: The ſpoils of war were often devoted to their divinities; and they puniſhed with the ſevereſt tortures whoever dared to ſecrete any part of the conſecrated offering: Theſe treaſures they kept in woods and foreſts, ſecured by no other guard than the terrors of their religion [h]; and this conqueſt over human avidity may be regarded as more ſignal than their prompting men to the moſt extraordinary and moſt violent efforts. No idolatrous worſhip ever attained ſuch an aſcendant over mankind as that of the ancient Gauls and Britons; and the Romans, after their conqueſt, finding it impoſſible to reconcile thoſe nations to the laws and inſtitutions of their maſters, while it maintained its authority, were at laſt obliged to aboliſh it by penal ſtatutes; a violence, which had never in any other inſtance been practiſed by thoſe tolerating conquerors [i].

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The ROMANS.

THE Britons had long remained in this rude but independant ſtate, when Cæſar, having over-run all Gaul by his victories, firſt caſt his eye on their iſland. He was not allured either by its riches or its renown; but being ambitious of carrying the Roman arms into a new world, then moſtly unknown, he took advantage of a ſhort interval in his Gaulic wars, and made an invaſion on Britain. The natives, informed of his intention, were ſenſible of the unequal conteſt, and endeavoured to appeaſe him by ſubmiſſions, which, however, retarded not the execution of his deſign. After ſome reſiſtance,

[h] Cæſar, lib. 6. [i] Sueton. in Vita Claudii.

CHAP. I. Anno ant. C. 55.

he landed, as is ſuppoſed, at Deal; and having obtained ſeveral advantages over the Britons, and obliged them to promiſe hoſtages for their future obedience, he was conſtrained, by the neceſſity of his affairs, and the approach of winter, to withdraw his forces into Gaul. The Britons, relieved from the terror of his arms, neglected the performance of their ſtipulations; and that haughty conqueror reſolved next ſummer to chaſtiſe them for this breach of treaty. He landed with a greater force; and though he found a more regular reſiſtance from the Britons, who had united under Caſſivelaunus, one of their petty princes; he diſcomfited them in every action. He advanced into the country; paſſed the Thames in the face of the enemy; took and burned the capital of Caſſivelaunus; eſtabliſhed his ally, Mandubratius, in the ſovereignty of the Trinobantes; and having obliged the inhabitants to make him new ſubmiſſions, he again returned with his army into Gaul, and left the authority of the Romans more nominal than real in this iſland.

THE civil wars, which enſued, and which prepared the way for the eſtabliſhment of monarchy in Rome, ſaved the Britons from that yoke, which was ready to be impoſed upon them. Auguſtus, the ſucceſſor of Cæſar, content with the victory obtained over the liberties of his own country, was little ambitious of acquiring fame by foreign wars; and being apprehenſive leſt the ſame unlimited extent of dominion, which had ſubverted the republic, might alſo overwhelm the empire, he recommended it to his ſucceſſors never to enlarge the territories of the Romans. Tiberius, jealous of the fame, which might be acquired by his generals, made this advice of Auguſtus a pretence for his inactivity [k]. The mad ſallies of Caligula, in which he menaced Britain with an invaſion, ſerved only to expoſe himſelf and the empire to ridicule: And the Britons had now, during almoſt a century, en-

[k] Tacit. Agr.

joyed

joyed their liberty unmoleſted; when the Romans, in the reign of Claudius, began to think ſeriouſly of reducing them under their dominion. Without ſeeking any more juſtifiable reaſons of hoſtility than were employed by the later Europeans in ſubjecting the Africans and Americans, they ſent over an army under the command of Plautius, an able general, who gained ſome victories, and made a conſiderable progreſs in ſubduing the inhabitants. Claudius himſelf, finding matters ſufficiently prepared for his reception, made a journey into Britain; and received the ſubmiſſion of ſeveral Britiſh ſtates, the Cantii, Atrebates, Regni, and Trinobantes, who inhabited the ſouth-eaſt parts of the iſland, and whom their poſſeſſions and cultivated manner of life rendered willing to purchaſe peace at the expence of their liberty. The other Britons, under the command of Caractacus, ſtill maintained an obſtinate reſiſtance, and the Romans made little progreſs againſt them; till Oſtorius Scapula was ſent over to command their armies. This general advanced the Roman conqueſts over the Britons; pierced into the country of the Silures, a warlike nation, who inhabited the banks of the Severne; defeated Caractacus in a great battle; took him priſoner, and ſent him to Rome, where his magnanimous behaviour procured him better treatment than thoſe conquerors uſually beſtowed on captive princes [1].

CHAP. I.

A. D. 43.

A. D. 50.

NOTWITHSTANDING theſe misfortunes, the Britons were not ſubdued; and this iſland was regarded by the ambitious Romans as a field in which military honour might ſtill be acquired. Under the reign of Nero, Suetonius Paulinus was inveſted with the command, and prepared to ſignalize his name by victories over thoſe barbarians. Finding that the iſland of Mona, now Angleſey, was the chief ſeat of the Druids, he reſolved to attack it, and to ſubject a place, which was the center

A. D. 59.

[1] Tacit. Ann. lib. 12.

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of their superstition, and which afforded protection to all their baffled forces. The Britons endeavoured to obstruct his landing on this sacred island, both by the force of their arms and the terrors of their religion. The women and priests were intermingled with the soldiers upon the shore; and running about with flaming torches in their hands, and tossing their dishevelled hair, they struck greater terror into the astonished Romans by their howlings, cries, and execrations, than the real danger from the armed forces was able to inspire. But Suetonius, exhorting his troops to despise the menaces of a superstition, which they despised, impelled them to the attack, drove the Britons off the field, burned the Druids in the same fires which those priests had prepared for their captive enemies, destroyed all the consecrated groves and altars; and, having thus triumphed over the religion of the Britons, he thought his future progress would be easy, in reducing the people to subjection. But he was disappointed in his expectations. The Britons, taking advantage of his absence, were all in arms; and headed by Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, who had been treated in the most ignominious manner by the Roman tribunes, had already attacked with success several settlements of their insulting conquerors. Suetonius hastened to the protection of London, which was already a flourishing city; but he found on his arrival, that it would be requisite for the general safety to abandon that place to the merciless fury of the enemy. London was reduced to ashes; such of the inhabitants as remained in it, were cruelly massacred; the Romans and all strangers, to the number of 70,000, were put to the sword without distinction; and the Britons, by rendering the war thus bloody, seemed determined to cut off all hopes of peace or composition with the enemy. But this cruelty was revenged by Suetonius in a great and decisive battle, where 80,000 of the Britons are said to have perished; and Boadicea herself, rather than fall into the hands

hands of the enraged victor, put an end to her own life by poiſon [m]. Nero ſoon after recalled Suetonius from a government, where, by ſuffering and inflicting ſo many ſeverities, he was judged improper for compoſing the angry and alarmed minds of the inhabitants. After ſome interval, Cerealis received the command from Veſpaſian, and by his bravery propagated the terror of the Roman arms. Julius Frontinus ſucceeded Cerealis both in authority and in reputation: But the general, who finally eſtabliſhed the dominion of the Romans in this iſland, was Julius Agricola, who governed it in the reigns of Veſpaſian, Titus, and Domitian, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf in that ſcene of action.

THIS great commander formed a regular plan for ſubduing Britain, and rendering the acquiſition uſeful to the conquerors. He carried his victorious arms northwards, defeated the Britons in every encounter, pierced into the inacceſſible foreſts and mountains of Caledonia, reduced every ſtate to ſubjection in the ſouthern parts of the iſland, and chaced before him all the men of fiercer and more intractable ſpirits, who deemed war and death itſelf leſs intolerable than ſervitude under the victors. He even defeated them in a deciſive action, which they fought under Galgacus, their leader; and having fixed a chain of garriſons, between the friths of Clyde and Forth, he thereby cut off the ruder and more barren parts of the iſland, and ſecured the Roman province from the incurſions of the barbarous inhabitants [n].

DURING theſe military enterprizes, he neglected not the arts of peace. He introduced laws and civility among the Britons, taught them to deſire and raiſe all the conveniencies of life, reconciled them to the Roman language and manners, inſtructed them in letters and ſcience, and employed every expedient to render thoſe chains,

[m] Tacit. Ann. lib. 14. [n] Tacit. Agr.

which

CHAP. I.

which he had forged, both eaſy and agreeable to them[a]. The inhabitants, having experienced how unequal their own force was to reſiſt that of the Romans, acquieſced in the dominion of their maſters, and were gradually incorporated as a part of that mighty empire.

THIS was the laſt durable conqueſt made by the Romans; and Britain, once ſubdued, gave no farther inquietude to the victor. Caledonia alone, defended by its barren mountains, and by the contempt which the Romans entertained for it, ſometimes infeſted the more cultivated parts of the iſland by the incurſions of its inhabitants. The better to ſecure the frontiers of the empire, Adrian, who viſited this iſland, built a rampart between the river Tyne and the frith of Solway: Lollius Urbicus, under Antoninus Pius, erected one in the place where Agricola had formerly eſtabliſhed his garriſons: Severus, who made an expedition into Britain, and carried his arms to the moſt northern extremity of it, added new fortifications to the wall of Adrian; and during the reigns of all the Roman emperors, ſuch a profound tranquillity prevailed in Britain, that little mention is made of the affairs of that iſland by any hiſtorian. The only incidents, which occur, are ſome ſeditions or rebellions of the Roman legions quartered there, and ſome uſurpations of the imperial dignity by the Roman governors. The natives, diſarmed, diſpirited, and ſubmiſſive, had loſt all deſire and even idea of their former liberty and independance.

BUT the period was now come, when that enormous fabric of the Roman empire, which had diffuſed ſlavery and oppreſſion, together with peace and civility, over ſo conſiderable a part of the globe, was approaching towards its final diſſolution. Italy, and the center of the empire, removed, during ſo many ages, from all concern in the

[a] Tacit. Agr.

wars,

CHAP. I.

wars, had entirely loſt the military ſpirit, and were peopled by an enervated race, equally diſpoſed to ſubmit to a foreign yoke, or to the tyranny of their own rulers. The emperors found themſelves obliged to recruit their legions from the frontier provinces, where the genius of war, though languiſhing, was not totally extinct; and theſe mercenary forces, careleſs of laws and civil inſtitutions, eſtabliſhed a military government, no leſs dangerous to the ſovereign than to the people. The farther progreſs of the ſame diſorders introduced the bordering barbarians into the ſervice of the Romans; and thoſe fierce nations, having now added diſcipline and ſkill to their native bravery, could no longer be reſtrained by the impotent policy of the emperors, who were accuſtomed to employ one in the deſtruction of the others. Senſible of their own force, and allured by the proſpect of ſo rich a prize, the northern barbarians, in the reign of Arcadius and Honorius, aſſailed at once all the frontiers of the Roman empire; and having firſt ſatiated their avidity by plunder, began to think of fixing a ſettlement in the waſted provinces. The more diſtant barbarians, who occupied the deſerted habitations of the former, advanced in their acquiſitions, and preſſed with their incumbent weight the Roman ſtate, already unequal to the load which it ſuſtained. Inſtead of arming the people in their own defence, the emperors recalled all the diſtant legions, in whom alone they could repoſe confidence; and collected the whole military force for the defence of the capital and center of the empire. The neceſſity of ſelf-preſervation had ſuperſeded the ambition of power; and the ancient point of honour, never to contract the limits of the empire, could no longer be attended to in this deſperate extremity.

BRITAIN by its ſituation was removed from the fury of theſe barbarous incurſions; and being alſo a remote province, not much valued by the Romans, the legions, which defended it, were carried over to the protection of Italy

CHAP. I.

Italy and Gaul. But that province, though ſecured by the ſea againſt the inroads of the greater tribes of barbarians, found enemies on its frontiers, who took advantage of its preſent defenceleſs ſituation. The Picts and Scots, who dwelt in the northern parts, beyond the wall of Antoninus, made incurſions upon their peaceable and effeminate neighbours; and beſides the temporary depredations which they committed, theſe combined nations threatened the whole province with ſubjection, or, what the inhabitants more dreaded, with plunder and devaſtation. The former people ſeem to have been a tribe of the native Britiſh race, who, having been chaced into the northern parts by the conqueſts of Agricola, had there intermingled with the ancient inhabitants: The other were derived from the ſame Celtic origin, had firſt been eſtabliſhed in Ireland, had ſent over a colony to the north-weſt coaſts of this iſland, and had long been accuſtomed, as well from their old as their new ſeats, to infeſt the Roman province by pyracy and rapine *. Theſe tribes, finding their more opulent neighbours expoſed to invaſion, ſoon broke over the Roman wall, no longer defended by the Roman arms; and though a contemptible enemy in themſelves, met with no reſiſtance from the unwarlike inhabitants. The Britons, accuſtomed to have recourſe to the emperors for defence as well as government, made ſupplications to Rome; and one legion was ſent over for their protection. This force was an over-match for the barbarians, repelled their invaſion, routed them in every engagement, and having chaced them into their ancient limits, returned in triumph to the defence of the ſouthern provinces of the empire [p]. Their retreat brought on a new invaſion of the enemy. The Britons made again an application to Rome, and obtained again the aſſiſtance of a legion, which proved effectual for their relief: But the Romans, reduced to

* See Note [A] at the end of the Volume.

[p] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 12. Paull. Diacon.

extremities

extremities at home, and fatigued with thoſe diſtant expeditions, informed the Britons that they muſt no longer look to them for ſuccour, exhorted them to arm in their own defence, and urged, that, as they were now their own maſters, it became them to protect by their valour that independance, which their ancient lords had conferred upon them [q]. That they might leave the iſland with the better grace, the Romans aſſiſted them in erecting anew the wall of Severus, which was built entirely of ſtone, and which the Britons had not at that time artificers ſkilful enough to repair [r]. And having done this laſt good office to the inhabitants, they bid a final adieu to Britain, about the year 448; after being maſters of the moſt conſiderable part of it during the courſe of near four centuries.

The BRITONS.

THE abject Britons regarded this preſent of liberty as fatal to them; and were in no condition to put in practice the prudent counſel given them by the Romans, to arm in their own defence. Unaccuſtomed both to the perils of war, and to the cares of civil government, they found themſelves incapable of forming or executing any meaſures for reſiſting the incurſions of the barbarians. Gratian alſo and Conſtantine, two Romans who had a little before aſſumed the purple in Britain, had carried over to the continent the flower of the Britiſh youth; and having periſhed in their unſucceſsful attempts on the imperial throne, had deſpoiled the iſland of thoſe, who, in this deſperate extremity, were beſt able to defend it. The Picts and Scots, finding that the Romans had finally relinquiſhed Britain, now regarded the whole as their prize, and attacked the northern wall with redoub-

[q] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 12. [r] Ibid.

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led forces. The Britons, already ſubdued by their own fears, found the ramparts but a weak defence for them; and deſerting their ſtation, left the country entirely open to the inroads of the barbarous enemy. The invaders carried devaſtation and ruin along with them; and exerted to the utmoſt their native ferocity, which was not mitigated by the helpleſs condition and ſubmiſſive behaviour of the inhabitants [s]. The unhappy Britons had a third time recourſe to Rome, which had declared its reſolution for ever to abandon them. Ætius, the patrician, ſuſtained, at that time, by his valour and magnanimity, the tottering ruins of the empire, and revived for a moment among the degenerate Romans the ſpirit, as well as diſcipline of their anceſtors. The Britiſh ambaſſadors carried to him the letter of their countrymen, which was inſcribed, *The Groans of the Britons*. The tenor of the epiſtle was ſuitable to its ſuperſcription. *The barbarians*, ſay they, *on the one hand, chace us into the ſea; the ſea, on the other, throws us back upon the barbarians; and we have only the hard choice left us, of periſhing by the ſword or by the waves* [t]. But Ætius, preſſed by the arms of Attila, the moſt terrible enemy that ever aſſailed the empire, had no leiſure to attend to the complaints of allies, whom generoſity alone could induce him to aſſiſt [u]. The Britons, thus rejected, were reduced to deſpair, deſerted their habitations, abandoned tillage, and flying for protection to the foreſts and mountains, ſuffered equally from hunger and from the enemy. The barbarians themſelves began to feel the preſſures of famine in a country which they had ravaged; and being haraſſed by the diſperſed Britons, who had not dared to reſiſt them in a

[s] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. Ann. Beverl. p. 45.

[t] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 13 Malmeſbury, lib. 1. cap. 1. Ann. Beverl. p. 45.

[u] Chron. Sax. p. 11. Edit. 1692.

body,

body, they retreated with their ſpoils into their own country [w]. CHAP. I.

THE Britons, taking advantage of this interval, returned to their uſual occupations; and the favourable ſeaſons, which ſucceeded, ſeconding their induſtry, made them ſoon forget their paſt miſeries, and reſtored to them great plenty of all the neceſſaries of life. No more can be imagined to have been poſſeſſed by a people ſo rude, who had not, without the aſſiſtance of the Romans, art of maſonry ſufficient to raiſe a ſtone rampart for their own defence: Yet the Monkiſh hiſtorians [x], who treat of thoſe events, complain of the luxury of the Britons during this period, and aſcribe to that vice, not to their cowardice or improvident counſels, all their ſubſequent calamities.

THE Britons, entirely occupied in the enjoyment of the preſent interval of peace, made no proviſion for reſiſting the enemy, who, invited by their former timid behaviour, ſoon threatened them with a new invaſion. We are not exactly informed what ſpecies of civil government the Romans on their departure had left among the Britons; but it appears probable, that the great men in the different diſtricts aſſumed a kind of regal, though precarious authority; and lived in a great meaſure independant of each other [y]. To this diſunion of counſels were alſo added the diſputes of theology; and the diſciples of Pelagius, who was himſelf a native of Britain, having encreaſed to a great multitude, gave alarm to the clergy, who ſeem to have been more intent on ſuppreſſing them, than on oppoſing the public enemy [z]. Labouring under theſe domeſtic evils, and menaced with a foreign invaſion, the Britons attended only to the ſuggeſtions of their preſent fears; and following the counſels of Vortigern,

[w] Ann. Beverl. p. 45. [x] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 14.
[y] Gildas, Uſher Ant. Brit. p. 248. 347. [z] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1. cap. 17. Conſtant. in vita Germ.

prince

CHAP. I. prince of Dumnonium, who, though ſtained with every vice, poſſeſſed the chief authority among them [a], they ſent into Germany a deputation to invite over the Saxons for their protection and aſſiſtance.

The SAXONS.

OF all the barbarous nations, known either in ancient or modern times, the Germans ſeem to have been the moſt diſtinguiſhed both by their manners and political inſtitutions, and to have carried to the higheſt pitch the virtues of valour and love of liberty; the only virtues which can have place among an uncivilized people, where juſtice and humanity are commonly neglected. Kingly government, even when eſtabliſhed among the Germans, (for it was not univerſal) poſſeſſed a very limited authority; and though the ſovereign was uſually choſen from amongſt the royal family, he was directed in every meaſure by the common conſent of the nation, over whom he preſided. When any important affairs were tranſacted, all the warriors met in arms; the men of greateſt authority employed perſuaſion to engage their conſent; the people expreſſed their approbation by rattling their armour, or their diſſent by murmurs; there was no neceſſity for a nice ſcrutiny of votes among a multitude, who were uſually carried with a ſtrong current to one ſide or the other; and the meaſure, thus ſuddenly choſen by general agreement, was executed with alacrity, and proſecuted with vigour. Even in war, the princes governed more by example than by authority: But in peace, the civil union was in a great meaſure diſſolved, and the inferior leaders adminiſtered juſtice, after an independant manner, each in his particular diſtrict. Theſe were elected by the votes of the people in their great councils; and though regard was paid to nobility in the choice, their perſonal qualities,

[a] Gildas, Gul. Malm. p. 8.

chiefly

chiefly their valour, procured them, from the suffrages of their fellow-citizens, that honourable but dangerous distinction. The warriors of each tribe attached themselves to their leader, with the most devoted affection and most unshaken constancy. They attended him as his ornament in peace, as his defence in war, as his council in the administration of justice. Their constant emulation in military renown dissolved not that inviolable friendship which they professed to their chieftain and to each other. To die for the honour of their band was their chief ambition: To survive its disgrace, or the death of their leader, was infamous. They even carried into the field their women and children, who adopted all the martial sentiments of the men: And being thus impelled by every human motive, they were invincible; where they were not opposed, either by the similar manners and institutions of the neighbouring Germans, or by the superior discipline, arms, and numbers of the Romans [b].

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The leaders and their military companions were maintained by the labour of their slaves, or by that of the weaker and less warlike part of the community, whom they defended. The contributions, which they levied, went not beyond a bare subsistence; and the honours, acquired by a superior rank, were the only reward of their superior dangers and fatigues. All the refined arts of life were unknown among the Germans: Tillage itself was almost wholly neglected: They even seem to have been anxious to prevent any improvements of that nature; and the leaders, by annually distributing anew all the land among the inhabitants of each village, kept them from attaching themselves to particular possessions, or making such progress in agriculture as might divert their attention from military expeditions, the chief occupation of the community [c].

[b] Cæsar, lib. 6. Tacit. de Mor. Germ. [c] Cæsar, lib. 6. Tacit. ibid.

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THE Saxons had been for ſome time regarded as one of the moſt warlike tribes of this fierce people, and had become the terror of the neighbouring nations [d]. They had diffuſed themſelves from the northern parts of Germany and the Cimbrian Cherſoneſus, and had taken poſſeſſion of all the ſea-coaſt from the mouth of the Rhine to Jutland; whence they had long infeſted by their pyracies all the eaſtern and ſouthern parts of Britain, and the northern of Gaul [e]. In order to oppoſe their inroads, the Romans had eſtabliſhed an officer, whom they called *Count of the Saxon ſhore*; and as the naval arts can flouriſh among a civilized people alone, they ſeem to have been more ſucceſsful in repelling the Saxons than any of the other barbarians, by whom they were invaded. The diſſolution of the Roman power invited them to renew their inroads; and it was an acceptable circumſtance, that the deputies of the Britons appeared among them, and prompted them to undertake an enterprize, to which they were of themſelves ſufficiently inclined [f].

HENGIST and Horſa, two brothers, poſſeſſed great credit among the Saxons, and were much celebrated both for their valour and nobility. They were reputed, as moſt of the Saxon princes, to be ſprung from Woden, who was worſhipped as a god among thoſe nations, and they are ſaid to be his great grandſons [g]; a circumſtance which added much to their authority. We ſhall not attempt to trace any higher the origin of thoſe princes and nations. It is evident what fruitleſs labour it muſt be to ſearch, in thoſe barbarous and illiterate ages, for the annals of a people, when their firſt leaders, known in any true hiſtory, were believed by them to be the fourth in deſcent from a fabulous deity, or from a man, exalted by ignorance into that character. The dark induſtry of an-

[d] Amm. Marcell. lib. 28. cap. 7. lib. 28. cap. 5. Oroſius. Saxon Chron. p. 13. [e] Amm. Marcell. lib. 27. [f] Will. Malm. p. 3. Nennius, cap. 28. [g] Bede, lib. 1.

tiquaries,

tiquaries, led by imaginary analogies of names, or by uncertain traditions, would in vain attempt to pierce into that deep obscurity, which covers the remote history of those nations.

THESE two brothers, observing the other provinces of Germany to be occupied by a warlike and necessitous people, and the rich provinces of Gaul already conquered or over-run by other German tribes, found it easy to persuade their countrymen to embrace the sole enterprize, which promised a favourable opportunity of displaying their valour and gratifying their avidity. They embarked their troops in three vessels, and about the year 449 or 450 [h], carried over 1600 men, who landed in the isle of Thanet, and immediately marched to the defence of the Britons against the northern invaders. The Scots and Picts were unable to resist the valour of these auxiliaries; and the Britons, applauding their own wisdom in calling over the Saxons, hoped thenceforth to enjoy peace and security under the powerful protection of that warlike people.

BUT Hengist and Horsa, perceiving, from their easy victory over the Scots and Picts, with what facility they might subdue the Britons themselves, who had not been able to resist those feeble invaders, were determined to conquer and fight for their own grandeur, not for the defence of their degenerate allies. They sent intelligence to Saxony of the fertility and riches of Britain; and represented as certain the subjection of a people, so long disused to arms, who, being now cut off from the Roman empire, of which they had been a province during so many ages, had not yet acquired any union among themselves, and were destitute of all affection to their new liberties, and of all national attachments and regards [i],

[h] Saxon Chronicle, p. 12. Gul. Malm. p. 11. Huntington, lib. 2. p. 309. Ethelwerd. Brompton, p. 728. [i] Chron. Sax. p. 12. Ann. Beverl. p. 49.

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THE Britons, impelled by these violent extremities, and rouzed to indignation against their treacherous auxiliaries, were necessitated to take arms; and having deposed Vortigern, who had become odious from his vices, and from the bad event of his rash counsels, they put themselves under the command of his son, Vortimer. They fought many battles with their enemies; and though the victories in these actions be disputed between the British and Saxon annalists, the progress still made by the Saxons prove that the advantage was commonly on their side. In one battle, however, fought at Eglesford, now Ailsford, Horsa, the Saxon general, was slain; and left the sole command over his countrymen in the hands of Hengist. This active general, continually reinforced by fresh numbers from Germany, carried devastation into the most remote corners of Britain; and being chiefly anxious to spread the terror of his arms, he spared neither age, nor sex, nor condition, wherever he marched with his victorious forces. The private and public edifices of the Britons were reduced to ashes: The priests were slaughtered on the altars by those idolatrous ravagers: The bishops

[k] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Nennius, cap. 35. Gildas, § 23.

and

and nobility ſhared the fate of the vulgar: The people, flying to the mountains and deſerts, were intercepted and butchered in heaps: Some were glad to accept of life and ſervitude under their victors: Others, deſerting their native country, took ſhelter in the province of Armorica; where, being charitably received by a people of the ſame language and manners, they ſettled in great numbers, and gave the country the name of Brittany [l]. CHAP. I.

THE Britiſh writers aſſign one cauſe, which facilitated the entrance of the Saxons into this iſland; the love, with which Vortigern was at firſt ſeized for Rovena, the daughter of Hengiſt, and which that artful warrior made uſe of to blind the eyes of the imprudent monarch [m]. The ſame hiſtorians add, that Vortimer died; and that Vortigern, being reſtored to the throne, accepted of a banquet from Hengiſt, at Stonehenge; where 300 of his nobility were treacherouſly ſlaughtered, and himſelf detained captive [n]. But theſe ſtories ſeem to have been invented by the Welſh authors, in order to palliate the weak reſiſtance made at firſt by their countrymen, and to account for the rapid progreſs and licentious devaſtations of the Saxons [o].

AFTER the death of Vortimer, Ambroſius, a Briton, though of Roman deſcent, was inveſted with the command over his countrymen, and endeavoured, not without ſucceſs, to unite them in their reſiſtance againſt the Saxons. Thoſe conteſts encreaſed the animoſity between the two nations, and rouzed the military ſpirit of the ancient inhabitants, which had before been ſunk into a fatal lethargy. Hengiſt, however, notwithſtanding their oppoſition, ſtill maintained his ground in Britain; and in order to divide the forces and attention of the natives, he called over a new tribe of Saxons, under the command of his brother Octa, and of Ebiſſa, the ſon of Octa; and he

[l] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Uſher, p. 226. Gildas, § 24.
[m] Nennius. Galfr. lib. 6. cap. 12. [n] Nennius, cap. 47. Galfr.
[o] Stillingfleet's Orig. Britt. p. 324, 325.

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ſettled them in Northumberland. He himſelf remained in the ſouthern parts of the iſland, and laid the foundation of the kingdom of Kent, comprehending the county of that name, Middleſex, Eſſex, and part of Surrey. He fixed his royal ſeat at Canterbury; where he governed about forty years, and he died in or near the year 488; leaving his new-acquired dominions to his poſterity.

THE ſucceſs of Hengiſt excited the avidity of the other northern Germans; and at different times, and under different leaders, they flocked over in multitudes to the invaſion of this iſland. Theſe conquerors were chiefly compoſed of three tribes, the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes [p], who all paſſed under the common appellation, ſometimes of Saxons, ſometimes of Angles; and ſpeaking the ſame language, and being governed by the ſame inſtitutions, they were naturally led, from theſe cauſes, as well as from their common intereſt, to unite themſelves againſt the ancient inhabitants. The reſiſtance however, though unequal, was ſtill maintained by the Britons; but became every day more feeble: And their misfortunes admitted of few intervals, till they were driven into Cornwal and Wales, and received protection from the remote ſituation or inacceſſible mountains of thoſe countries.

THE firſt Saxon ſtate, after that of Kent, which was eſtabliſhed in Britain, was the kingdom of South-Saxony. In the year 477 [q], Ælla, a Saxon chief, brought over an army from Germany; and landing on the ſouthern coaſt, proceeded to take poſſeſſion of the neighbouring territory. The Britons, now armed, did not tamely abandon their poſſeſſions; nor were they expelled, till de-

[p] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 15. Ethelwerd, p. 833. edit. Camdeni. Chron. Sax. p. 12. Ann. Beverl. p. 78. The inhabitants of Kent and the Iſle of Wight were Jutes. Eſſex, Middleſex, Surrey, Suſſex, and all the ſouthern counties to Cornwal, were peopled by Saxons: Mercia and other parts of the kingdom were inhabited by Angles.

[q] Chron. Sax. p. 14. Ann. Beverl. p. 81.

feated

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feated in many battles by their warlike invaders. The moſt memorable action, mentioned by hiſtorians, is that of Mearcredes-Burn [r]; where, though the Saxons ſeem to have obtained the victory, they ſuffered ſo conſiderable a loſs, as ſomewhat retarded the progreſs of their conqueſts. But Ælla, reinforced by freſh numbers of his countrymen, again took the field againſt the Britons; and laid ſiege to Andred-Ceaſter, which was defended by the garriſon and inhabitants with deſperate valour [s]. The Saxons, enraged by this reſiſtance, and by the fatigues and dangers which they had ſuſtained, redoubled their efforts againſt the place, and when maſters of it, put all their enemies to the ſword without diſtinction. This deciſive advantage ſecured the conqueſts of Ælla, who aſſumed the name of King, and extended his dominion over Suſſex and a great part of Surrey. He was ſtopped in his progreſs to the eaſt by the kingdom of Kent: In that to the weſt by another tribe of Saxons, who had taken poſſeſſion of that territory.

These Saxons, from the ſituation of the country, in which they ſettled, were called the Weſt-Saxons, and landed in the year 495, under the command of Cerdic, and of his ſon Kenric [t]. The Britons were, by paſt experience, ſo much on their guard, and ſo well prepared to receive the enemy, that they gave battle to Cerdic the very day of his landing; and though vanquiſhed, ſtill defended, for ſome time, their liberties againſt the invaders. None of the other tribes of Saxons met with ſuch vigorous reſiſtance, or exerted ſuch valour and perſeverance in puſhing their conqueſts. Cerdic was even obliged to call for the aſſiſtance of his countrymen from the kingdoms of Kent and Suſſex, as well as from Germany, and he was thence joined by a freſh army under

[r] Saxon. Chron. A. D. 485. Flor. Wigorn. [s] Hen. Huntin. lib. 2. [t] Will. Malm. lib. 1. cap. 1. p. 12. Chron. Sax. p. 15.

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the command of Porte, and of his ſons Bleda and Megla [u]. Strengthened by theſe ſuccours, he fought, in the year 508, a deſperate battle with the Britons, commanded by Nazan-Leod, their leader, who was victorious in the beginning of the action, and routed the wing in which Cerdic himſelf commanded. But Kenric, who had prevailed in the other wing, brought timely aſſiſtance to his father, and reſtored the battle, which ended in a complete victory gained by the Saxons [w]. Nazan-Leod periſhed, with 5000 of his army: But left the Britons more weakened than diſcouraged by his death. The war ſtill continued, though the ſucceſs was commonly on the ſide of the Saxons, whoſe ſhort ſwords and cloſe manner of fighting gave them great advantage over the miſſile weapons of the Britons. Cerdic was not wanting to his good fortune; and in order to extend his conqueſts, he laid ſiege to Mount Badon or Baneſdowne near Bath, whither the moſt obſtinate of the diſcomfited Britons had retired. The ſouthern Britons in this extremity applied for aſſiſtance to Arthur, Prince of the Silures, whoſe heroic valour now ſuſtained the declining fate of his country [x]. This is that Arthur ſo much celebrated by the ſongs of Thalieſſin, and the other Britiſh bards, and whoſe military atchievements have been blended with ſo many fables as even to give occaſion for entertaining a doubt of his real exiſtence. But poets, though they diſfigure the moſt certain hiſtory by their fictions, and uſe ſtrange liberties with truth where they are the ſole hiſtorians, as among the Britons, have commonly ſome foundation for their wildeſt exaggerations. Certain it is, that the ſiege of Badon was raiſed by the Britons in the year 520; and the Saxons were there diſcomfited in a great battle [y]. This misfortune ſtopped the progreſs of Cerdic; but was not

[u] Chron. Sax. p. 17. Chron. Sax. p. 17. Chron. H. Hunting. lib. 2.

[w] H. Hunting. lib. 2.

[x] Hunting. lib. 2.

[y] Gildas, Saxon Ethelwerd, lib. 1.

ſufficient

ſufficient to wreſt from him the conqueſts, which he had already made. He and his ſon, Kenric, who ſucceeded him, eſtabliſhed the kingdom of the Weſt-Saxons or of Weſſex, over the counties of Hants, Dorſet, Wilts, Berks, and the Iſle of Wight, and left their new-acquired dominions to their poſterity. Cerdic died in 534, Kenric in 560.

While the Saxons made this progreſs in the ſouth, their countrymen were not leſs active in other quarters. In the year 527, a great tribe of adventurers, under ſeveral leaders, landed on the eaſt-coaſt of Britain; and after fighting many battles, of which hiſtory has preſerved no particular account, they eſtabliſhed three new kingdoms in this iſland. Uffa aſſumed the title of king of the Eaſt-Angles in 575; Crida that of Mercia in 585 [z]; and Erkenwin that of Eaſt-Saxony or Eſſex nearly about the ſame time; but the year is uncertain. This latter kingdom was diſmembered from that of Kent, and comprehended Eſſex, Middleſex, and part of Hertfordſhire. That of the Eaſt-Angles, the counties of Cambridge, Suffolk, and Norfolk: Mercia was extended over all the middle counties, from the banks of the Severn, to the frontiers of theſe two kingdoms.

The Saxons, ſoon after the landing of Hengiſt, had been planted in Northumberland; but as they met with an obſtinate reſiſtance, and made but ſmall progreſs in ſubduing the inhabitants, their affairs were in ſo unſettled a condition, that none of their princes for a long time aſſumed the appellation of king. At laſt in 547 [a], Ida, a Saxon prince of great valour [b], who claimed a deſcent, as did all the other princes of that nation, from Woden, brought over a reinforcement from Germany, and enabled the Northumbrians to carry on their conqueſts over the Britons. He entirely ſubdued the county now called

[z] Math. Weſt. Huntingdon, lib. 2.
[a] Chron. Sax. p. 19.
[b] Will. Malmſ. p. 19.

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Northumberland, the biſhopric of Durham, as well as ſome of the ſouth-eaſt counties of Scotland; and he aſſumed the crown under the title of king of Bernicia. Nearly about the ſame time, Ælla, another Saxon prince, having conquered Lancaſhire, and the greateſt part of Yorkſhire, received the appellation of king of Deïri[c]. Theſe two kingdoms were united in the perſon of Ethelfrid, grandſon of Ida, who married Acca, the daughter of Ælla; and expelling her brother, Edwin, eſtabliſhed one of the moſt powerful of the Saxon kingdoms, under the title of Northumberland. How far his dominions extended into the country now called Scotland is uncertain; but it cannot be doubted, that all the lowlands, eſpecially the eaſt-coaſt of that country, were peopled in a great meaſure from Germany; though the expeditions, made by the ſeveral Saxon adventurers, have eſcaped the records of hiſtory. The language, ſpoken in thoſe countries, which is purely Saxon, is a ſtronger proof of this event, than can be oppoſed by the imperfect, or rather fabulous annals, which are obtruded on us by the Scottiſh hiſtorians.

The HEPTARCHY.

THUS was eſtabliſhed, after a violent conteſt of near a hundred and fifty years, the Heptarchy, or ſeven Saxon kingdoms, in Britain; and the whole ſouthern part of the iſland, except Wales and Cornwal, had totally changed its inhabitants, language, cuſtoms, and political inſtitutions. The Britons, under the Roman dominion, had made ſuch advances towards arts and civil manners, that they had built twenty-eight conſiderable cities within their province, beſides a great number of villages and country-ſeats[d]: But the fierce conquerors, by whom they

[c] Ann. Beverl. p. 78. [d] Gildas, Bede, lib. 1.

were

were now ſubdued, threw every thing back into ancient barbarity; and thoſe few natives, who were not either maſſacred or expelled their habitations, were reduced to the moſt abject ſlavery. None of the other northern conquerors, the Franks, Goths, Vandals, or Burgundians, though they over-ran the ſouthern provinces of the empire like a mighty torrent, made ſuch devaſtations in the conquered territories, or were inflamed into ſo violent an animoſity againſt the ancient inhabitants. As the Saxons came over at intervals in ſeparate bodies, the Britons, however at firſt unwarlike, were tempted to make reſiſtance; and hoſtilities, being thereby prolonged, proved more deſtructive to both parties, eſpecially to the vanquiſhed. The firſt invaders from Germany, inſtead of excluding other adventurers, who muſt ſhare with them the ſpoils and property of the ancient inhabitants, were obliged to ſolicit freſh ſupplies from their own country; and a total extermination of the Britons became the ſole expedient for providing a ſettlement and ſubſiſtance to the new planters. Hence there have been found in hiſtory few conqueſts more ruinous than that of the Saxons; and few revolutions more violent than that which they introduced. CHAP. I.

So long as the conteſt was maintained with the natives, the ſeveral Saxon princes preſerved an union of counſels and intereſts; but after the Britons were ſhut up in the barren countries of Cornwal and Wales, and gave no farther diſturbance to the conquerors, the band of alliance was in a great meaſure diſſolved among the princes of the Heptarchy. Though one prince ſeems ſtill to have been allowed, or to have aſſumed, an aſcendant over the whole, his authority, if it ought ever to be deemed regular or legal, was extremely limited; and each ſtate acted as if it had been independant, and wholly ſeparate from the reſt. Wars, therefore, and revolutions and diſſentions were unavoidable among a turbulent and military people; and

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theſe events, however intricate or confuſed, ought now to become the objects of our attention. But, added to the difficulty of carrying on at once the hiſtory of ſeven independant kingdoms, there is great diſcouragement to a writer, ariſing from the uncertainty, at leaſt barrenneſs, of the accounts tranſmitted to us. The Monks, who were the only annaliſts during thoſe ages, lived remote from public affairs, conſidered the civil tranſactions as entirely ſubordinate to the eccleſiaſtical, and beſides partaking of the ignorance and barbarity, which were then univerſal, were ſtrongly infected with credulity, with the love of wonder, and with a propenſity to impoſture; vices almoſt inſeparable from their profeſſion, and manner of life. The hiſtory of that period abounds in names, but is extremely barren of events; or the events are related ſo much without circumſtances and cauſes, that the moſt profound or moſt eloquent writer muſt deſpair of rendering them either inſtructive or entertaining to the reader. Even the great learning and vigorous imagination of Milton ſunk under the weight; and this author ſcruples not to declare, that the ſkirmiſhes of kites or crows were as much deſerving a particular narrative, as the confuſed tranſactions and battles of the Saxon Heptarchy[e]. In order, however, to connect the events in ſome tolerable meaſure, we ſhall give a ſuccinct account of the ſucceſſions of kings, and of the more remarkable revolutions in each particular kingdom; beginning with that of Kent, which was the firſt eſtabliſhed.

The Kingdom of KENT.

ESCUS ſucceeded his father, Hengiſt, in the kingdom of Kent; but ſeems not to have poſſeſſed the military genius of that conqueror, who firſt made way for the entrance of the Saxon arms into Britain. All the

[e] Milton in Kennet, p. 50.

Saxons,

Saxons, who fought either the fame of valour, or new eſtabliſhments by arms, flocked to the ſtandard of Ælla, king of Suſſex, who was carrying on ſucceſsful war againſt the Britons, and laying the foundations of a new kingdom. Eſcus was content to poſſeſs in tranquillity the kingdom of Kent, which he left in 512 to his ſon Octa, in whoſe time the Eaſt-Saxons eſtabliſhed their monarchy, and diſmembered the provinces of Eſſex and Middleſex from that of Kent. His death, after a reign of twenty-two years, made room for his ſon Hermenric in 534, who performed nothing memorable during a reign of thirty-two years; except aſſociating with him his ſon, Ethelbert, in the government, that he might ſecure the ſucceſſion in his family, and prevent ſuch revolutions as are incident to a turbulent and barbarous monarchy. CHAP. I.

Ethelbert revived the reputation of his family, which had languiſhed for ſome generations. The inactivity of his predeceſſors, and the ſituation of his country, ſecured from all hoſtility with the Britons, ſeem to have much enfeebled the warlike genius of the Kentiſh Saxons; and Ethelbert, in his firſt attempt to aggrandize his country, and diſtinguiſh his own name, was unſucceſsful [f]. He was twice diſcomfited in battle by Ceaulin, king of Weſſex; and obliged to yield the ſuperiority in the Heptarchy to that ambitious monarch, who preſerved no moderation in his victory, and by reducing the kingdom of Suſſex to ſubjection, excited jealouſy in all the other princes. An aſſociation was formed againſt him; and Ethelbert, entruſted with the command of the allies, gave him battle, and obtained a deciſive victory [g]. Ceaulin died ſoon after; and Ethelbert ſucceeded as well to his aſcendant among the Saxon ſtates, as to his other ambitious projects. He reduced all the princes, except the king of Northumberland, to a ſtrict dependance upon him; and even eſtabliſhed himſelf by force on the throne

[f] Chron. Sax. p. 21. [g] H. Hunting. lib. 2.

of

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of Mercia, the moſt extenſive of the Saxon kingdoms. Apprehenſive, however, of a dangerous league againſt him, like that by which he himſelf had been enabled to overthrow Ceaulin, he had the prudence to reſign the throne of Mercia to Webba, the rightful heir, the ſon of Crida, who had firſt founded that monarchy. But governed ſtill by ambition more than by juſtice, he gave Webba poſſeſſion of the crown on ſuch conditions, as rendered him little better than a tributary prince under his artful benefactor.

But the moſt memorable event, which diſtinguiſhed the reign of this great prince, was the introduction of the Chriſtian religion among the Engliſh Saxons. The ſuperſtition of the Germans, particularly that of the Saxons, was of the groſſeſt and moſt barbarous kind; and being founded on certain traditional tales, received from their anceſtors, not reduced to any ſyſtem, not ſupported by political inſtitutions, like that of the Druids, it ſeems to have made little impreſſion on its votaries, and to have eaſily reſigned its place to the new doctrine, promulgated to them. Woden, whom they deemed the anceſtor of all their princes, was regarded as the god of war, and, by a natural conſequence, became their ſupreme deity, and the chief object of their religious worſhip. They believed, that, if they obtained the favour of this divinity by their valour, (for they made leſs account of the other virtues) they would be admitted after their death into his hall; and repoſing on couches, would ſatiate themſelves with ale from the ſkulls of their enemies, whom they had ſlain in battle. Incited by this idea of paradiſe, which gratified at once the paſſion of revenge and that of intemperance, the ruling inclinations of barbarians, they deſpiſed the dangers of war; and encreaſed their native ferocity againſt the vanquiſhed by their religious prejudices. We know little of the other theological tenets of the Saxons: We only learn that they were polytheiſts; that they

they worſhipped the ſun and moon; that they adored the god of thunder, under the name of Thor; that they had images in their temples; that they practiſed ſacrifices; believed firmly in ſpells and inchantments; and admitted in general a ſyſtem of doctrines, which they held as ſacred, but which, like all other ſuperſtitions, muſt carry the air of the wildeſt extravagance, if propounded to thoſe who are not familiarized to it from their earlieſt infancy.

THE conſtant hoſtilities, which the Saxons maintained againſt the Britons, would naturally indiſpoſe them for receiving the Chriſtian faith, when preached to them by ſuch inveterate enemies; and perhaps the Britons, as is objected to them by Gildas and Bede, were not overfond of communicating to their cruel invaders the doctrine of eternal life and ſalvation. But as a civilized people, however ſubdued by arms, ſtill maintain a ſenſible ſuperiority over barbarous and ignorant nations, all the other northern conquerors of Europe had been already induced to embrace the Chriſtian faith, which they found eſtabliſhed in the empire; and it was impoſſible but the Saxons, informed of this event, muſt have regarded with ſome degree of veneration a doctrine, which had acquired the aſcendant over all their brethren. However limited in their views, they could not but have perceived a degree of cultivation in the ſouthern countries beyond what they themſelves poſſeſſed; and it was natural for them to yield to that ſuperior knowledge, as well as zeal, by which the inhabitants of the Chriſtian kingdoms were even at that time diſtinguiſhed.

BUT theſe cauſes might long have failed of producing any conſiderable effect, had not a favourable incident prepared the means for introducing Chriſtianity into Kent. Ethelbert, in his father's lifetime, had married Bertha, the only daughter of Caribert, king of Paris [h], one of the

[h] Greg. of Tours, lib 9. cap. 26. H. Hunting. lib. 2.

deſcendants

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It happened, that this prelate, being at that time in a private station, had observed in the market-place of Rome some Saxon youth exposed to sale, whom the Roman merchants, in their trading voyages to Britain, had bought of their mercenary parents. Struck with the beauty of their fair complexions and blooming countenances, Gregory asked to what country they belonged; and being told they were *Angles*, he replied, that they ought more properly to be denominated *angels:* It was a pity that the Prince of Darkness should enjoy so fair a prey, and that so beautiful a frontispiece should cover a mind destitute of internal grace and righteousness. Enquiring farther concerning the name of their province, he was informed, that it was Deïri, a district of Northumberland: *Deïri!* replied he, *that is good! They are call'd to the mercy of God from his anger*, De ira. *But what is the name of the king of that province?* He was told it was *Ælla* or *Aila: Alleluiah*, cried he: *We must endeavour, that the praises of God be sung in their coun-*

[i] Bede, lib. 1, cap. 25. Brompton, p. 729.

try.

try. Moved by these allusions, which appeared to him so happy, he determined to undertake, himself, a mission into Britain; and having obtained the Pope's approbation, he prepared for that perilous journey: But his popularity at home was so great, that the Romans, unwilling to expose him to such dangers, opposed his design; and he was obliged for the present to lay aside all farther thoughts of executing that pious purpose [k]. CHAP. I.

THE controversy between the Pagans and the Christians was not entirely cooled in that age; and no pontiff before Gregory had ever carried to greater excess an intemperate zeal against the former religion. He had waged war with all the precious monuments of the ancients, and even with their writings; which, as appears from the strain of his own wit, as well as from the style of his compositions, he had not taste or genius sufficient to comprehend. Ambitious to distinguish his pontificate by the conversion of the British Saxons, he pitched on Augustine, a Roman monk, and sent him with forty associates to preach the gospel in this island. These missionaries, terrified with the dangers which might attend their proposing a new doctrine to so fierce a people, of whose language they were ignorant, stopped some time in France, and sent back Augustine to lay the hazards and difficulties before the Pope, and crave his permission to desist from the undertaking. But Gregory exhorted them to persevere in their purpose, advised them to chuse some interpreters from among the Franks, who still spoke the same language with the Saxons [l], and recommended them to the good offices of queen Brunehaut, who had at this time usurped the sovereign power in France. This princess, though stained with every vice of treachery and cruelty, either possessed or pretended great zeal for the

[k] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 1. Spell. Conc. p. 91. [l] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 23.

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AUGUSTINE, on his arrival in Kent in the year 597 [n], found the danger much leſs than he had apprehended. Ethelbert, already well-diſpoſed towards the Chriſtian faith, aſſigned him a habitation in the iſle of Thanet; and ſoon after admitted him to a conference. Apprehenſive, however, leſt ſpells or enchantments might be employed againſt him by prieſts, who brought an unknown worſhip from a diſtant country, he had the precaution to receive them in the open air, where, he believed, the force of their magic would be more eaſily diſſipated [o]. Here Auguſtine, by means of his interpreters, delivered to him the tenets of the Chriſtian faith, and promiſed him eternal joys above, and a kingdom in heaven without end, if he would be perſuaded to receive that ſalutary doctrine. "[p] Your words and promiſes," replied Ethelbert, "are fair; but becauſe they are new and uncertain, "I cannot entirely yield to them, and relinquiſh the "principles, which I and my anceſtors have ſo long main- "tained. You are welcome, however, to remain here "in peace; and as you have undertaken ſo long a jour- "ney, ſolely, as it appears, for what you believe to be "for our advantage, I will ſupply you with all neceſſa- "ries, and permit you to deliver your doctrine to my "ſubjects [q]."

AUGUSTINE, encouraged by this favourable reception, and ſeeing now a proſpect of ſucceſs, proceeded with redoubled zeal to preach the goſpel to the Kentiſh Saxons. He attracted their attention by the auſterity of his man-

[m] Greg. Epiſt. lib. 9. epiſt. 56. Spell. Conc. p. 82. [n] Higden, Polychron. lib. 5. Chron. Sax. p. 23. [o] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. H. Hunting. lib. 3. Brompton, p. 729. Parker Antiq. Brit. Eccl. p. 61. [p] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. Chron. W. Thorn p. 1759. [q] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 25. H. Hunting. lib. 3. Brompton, p. 729.

ners, by the ſevere penances to which he ſubjected himſelf, by the abſtinence and ſelf-denial which he practiſed: And having excited their wonder by a courſe of life, which appeared ſo contrary to nature, he procured more eaſily their belief of miracles, which, it was pretended, he wrought for their converſion [r]. Influenced by theſe motives, and by the declared favour of the court, numbers of the Kentiſh men were baptized; and the king himſelf was perſuaded to ſubmit to that rite of Chriſtianity. His example had great influence with his ſubjects; but he employed no force to bring them over to the new doctrine. Auguſtine thought proper, in the commencement of his miſſion, to aſſume the appearance of the greateſt lenity: He told Ethelbert, that the ſervice of Chriſt muſt be entirely voluntary, and that no violence ought ever to be uſed in propagating ſo ſalutary a doctrine [s].

THE intelligence, received of theſe ſpiritual conqueſts, afforded great joy to the Romans; who now exulted as much in theſe peaceful trophies, as their anceſtors had ever done in their moſt ſanguinary triumphs, and moſt ſplendid victories. Gregory wrote a letter to Ethelbert, in which, after informing him that the end of the world was approaching, he exhorted him to diſplay his zeal in the converſion of his ſubjects, to exert rigour againſt the worſhip of idols, and to build up the good work of holineſs by every expedient of exhortation, terror, blandiſhment, or correction [t]: A doctrine more ſuitable to that age, and to the uſual papal maxims, than the tolerating principles, which Auguſtine had thought it prudent to inculcate. The pontiff alſo anſwered ſome queſtions, which the miſſionary had put concerning the government of the new church of Kent. Beſides other queries, which

[r] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 26. [s] Ibid. cap. 26. H. Hunting. lib. 3.
[t] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 32. Brompton, p. 732. Spell. Conc. p. 86.

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it is not material here to relate, Auguſtine aſked, *Whether couſin-germans might be allowed to marry?* Gregory anſwered, that that liberty had indeed been formerly granted by the Roman law; but that experience had ſhewn, that no poſterity could ever come from ſuch marriages; and he therefore prohibited them. Auguſtine aſked, *Whether a woman pregnant might be baptized?* Gregory anſwered, that he ſaw no objection. *How ſoon after the birth the child might receive baptiſm?* It was anſwered, Immediately, if neceſſary. *How ſoon a huſband might have commerce with his wife after her delivery?* Not till ſhe had given ſuck to her child; a practice to which Gregory exhorts all women. *How ſoon a man might enter the church, or receive the ſacrament, after having had commerce with his wife?* It was replied, that, unleſs he had approached her without deſire, merely for the ſake of propagating his ſpecies, he was not without ſin: But in all caſes it was requiſite for him, before he entered the church, or communicated, to purge himſelf by prayer and ablution; and he ought not, even after uſing theſe precautions, to participate immediately of the ſacred duties [u]. There are ſome other queſtions and replies ſtill more indecent and more ridiculous [w]. And on the whole, it appears, that Gregory and his miſſionary, if ſympathy of manners have any influence, were better calculated than men of more refined underſtandings, for making a progreſs with the ignorant and barbarous Saxons.

[u] Bede, lib. 1. cap. 27. Spell. Conc. p. 97, 98, 99, &c.

[w] Auguſtine aſks, *Si mulier menſtrua conſuetudine tenetur, an eccleſiam intrare ei licet, aut ſacræ communionis ſacramenta percipere?* Gregory anſwers, *Sanctæ communionis myſterium in eiſdem diebus percipere non debet prohiberi. Si autem ex veneratione magna percipere non præſumitur, laudanda eſt.* Auguſtine aſks, *Si poſt illuſionem, quæ per ſomnum ſolet accidere, vel corpus Domini quilibet accipere valeat; vel, ſi ſacerdos ſit, ſacra myſteria celebrare?* Gregory anſwers this learned queſtion by many learned diſtinctions.

THE

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THE more to facilitate the reception of Chriſtianity, Gregory enjoined Auguſtine to remove the idols from the Heathen altars, but not to deſtroy the altars themſelves; becauſe the people, he ſaid, would be allured to frequent the Chriſtian worſhip, when they found it celebrated in a place, which they were accuſtomed to revere. And as the Pagans practiſed ſacrifices, and feaſted with the prieſts on their offerings, he alſo exhorted the miſſionary to perſuade them, on Chriſtian feſtivals, to kill their cattle in the neighbourhood of the church, and to indulge themſelves in thoſe cheerful entertainments, to which they had been habituated [x]. Theſe political compliances ſhew, that, notwithſtanding his ignorance and prejudices, he was not unacquainted with the arts of governing mankind. Auguſtine was conſecrated archbiſhop of Canterbury, was endowed by Gregory with authority over all the Britiſh churches, and received the pall, a badge of eccleſiaſtical honour, from Rome [y]. Gregory alſo adviſed him not to be too much elated with his gift of working miracles [z]; and as Auguſtine, proud of the ſucceſs of his miſſion, ſeemed to think himſelf entitled to extend his authority over the biſhops of Gaul, the Pope informed him, that they lay entirely without the bounds of his juriſdiction [a].

THE marriage of Ethelbert with Bertha, and much more his embracing Chriſtianity, begat a connexion of his ſubjects with the French, Italians, and other nations on the continent, and tended to reclaim them from that groſs ignorance and barbarity, in which all the Saxon tribes had been hitherto involved [b]. Ethelbert alſo enacted [c], with the conſent of the ſtates of his kingdom, a body of laws, the firſt written laws promulgated by any

x Bede, lib. 1. cap. 30. Spell. Conc. p. 89. Greg. Epiſt. lib. 9. epiſt. 71.
y Chron. Sax. p. 23, 24. z H. Hunting. lib. 3. Spell. Conc. p. 83. Bede, lib. 1. Greg. Epiſt. lib. 9. epiſt. 60. a Bede, lib. 1. cap. 27. b Will. Malm. p. 10. c Wilkins Leges Sax. p. 13.

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of the northern conquerors; and his reign was in every reſpect glorious to himſelf, and beneficial to his people. He governed the kingdom of Kent fifty years; and dying in 616, left the ſucceſſion to his ſon, Eadbald. This prince, ſeduced by a paſſion for his mother-in-law, deſerted for ſome time the Chriſtian faith, which permitted not theſe inceſtuous marriages: His whole people immediately returned with him to idolatry. Laurentius, the ſucceſſor of Auguſtine, found the Chriſtian worſhip wholly abandoned, and was preparing to return to France, in order to eſcape the mortification of preaching the goſpel without fruit to the infidels. Mellitus and Juſtus, who had been conſecrated biſhops of London and Rocheſter, had already departed the kingdom [d]; when Laurentius, before he ſhould entirely abandon his dignity, made one effort to reclaim the King. He appeared before that prince; and throwing off his veſtments, ſhowed his body all torn with bruiſes and ſtripes, which he had received. Eadbald, wondering that any man ſhould have dared to treat in that manner a perſon of his rank, was told by Laurentius, that he had received this chaſtiſement from St. Peter, the prince of the apoſtles, who had appeared to him in a viſion, and ſeverely reproving him for his intention to deſert his charge, had inflicted on him theſe viſible marks of his diſpleaſure [e]. Whether Eadbald was ſtruck with the miracle, or influenced by ſome other motive, he divorced himſelf from his mother-in-law, and returned to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity [f]: His whole people returned with him. Eadbald reached not the fame or authority of his father, and died in 640, after a reign of twenty-five years; leaving two ſons, Erminfrid and Ercombert.

ERCOMBERT, though the youngeſt ſon, by Emma, a French princeſs, found means to mount the throne. He

[d] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 5. [e] Ibid. cap. 6. Chron. Sax. p. 26. Higden, lib. 5. [f] Brompton, p. 739.

is

is celebrated by Bede for two exploits, for eſtabliſhing the faſt of Lent in his kingdom, and for utterly extirpating idolatry; which, notwithſtanding the prevalence of Chriſtianity, had hitherto been tolerated by the two preceding monarchs. He reigned twenty-four years; and left the crown to Egbert, his ſon, who reigned nine years. This prince is renowned for his encouragement of learning; but infamous for putting to death his two couſin-germans, ſons of Erminfrid, his uncle. The eccleſiaſtical writers praiſe him for his beſtowing on his ſiſter Domnona, ſome lands in the Iſle of Thanet, where ſhe founded a monaſtery. CHAP. I.

THE bloody precaution of Egbert could not fix the crown on the head of his ſon, Edric. Lothaire, brother to the deceaſed prince, took poſſeſſion of the kingdom; and, in order to ſecure the power in his family, he aſſociated with him Richard, his ſon, in the adminiſtration of the government. Edric, the diſpoſſeſſed prince, had recourſe to Edilwach, king of Suſſex, for aſſiſtance; and being ſupported by that prince, fought a battle with his uncle, who was defeated and ſlain. Richard fled into Germany, and afterwards died in Lucca, a city of Tuſcany. William of Malmeſbury aſcribes Lothaire's bad fortune to two crimes, his concurrence in the murder of his couſins, and his contempt for reliques [g].

LOTHAIRE reigned eleven years; Edric, his ſucceſſor, only two. Upon the death of the latter, which happened in 686, Widred, his brother, obtained poſſeſſion of the crown. But as the ſucceſſion had been of late ſo much disjointed by revolutions and uſurpations, faction began to prevail among the nobility; which invited Cedwalla, king of Weſſex, with his brother Mollo, to attack the kingdom. Theſe invaders committed great devaſtations in Kent; but the death of Mollo, who was ſlain in a ſkirmiſh [h], gave a ſhort breathing-time to that kingdom.

[g] Will. Malm. p. 11. [h] Higden, lib. 5.

CHAP. I. Widred reſtored the affairs of Kent; and after a reign of thirty-two years [i], left the crown to his poſterity. Eadbert, Ethelbert, and Alric, his deſcendants, ſucceſſively mounted the throne. After the death of the laſt, which happened in 794, the royal family of Kent was extinguiſhed; and every factious leader who could entertain hopes of aſcending the throne, threw the ſtate into confuſion. [k] Egbert, who firſt ſucceeded, reigned but two years; Cuthred, brother to the king of Mercia, ſix years; Baldred, an illegitimate branch of the royal family, eighteen: And after a troubleſome and precarious reign, he was, in the year 723, expelled by Egbert, king of Weſſex, who diſſolved the Saxon heptarchy, and united the ſeveral kingdoms under his dominion.

The Kingdom of NORTHUMBERLAND.

ADELFRID, king of Bernicia, having married Acca, the daughter of Ælla, king of Deïri, and expelled her infant brother, Edwin, had united all the counties north of Humber into one monarchy, and acquired a great aſcendant in the heptarchy. He alſo ſpread the terror of the Saxon arms to the neighbouring people; and by his victories over the Scots and Picts, as well as Welſh, extended on all ſides the bounds of his dominions. Having laid ſiege to Cheſter, the Britons marched out with all their forces to engage him; and they were attended by a body of 1250 monks from the monaſtery of Bangor, who ſtood at a ſmall diſtance from the field of battle, in order to encourage the combatants by their preſence and exhortations. Adelfrid enquiring the purpoſe of this unuſual appearance, was told, that theſe prieſts had come to pray againſt him: *Then are they as much our enemies*, ſaid he, *as thoſe who intend to fight*

[i] Chron. Sax. p. 52. [k] Will. Malmeſ. lib. 1. cap. 1. p. 11.

againſt

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againſt us[l]: And he immediately ſent a detachment, who fell upon them, and did ſuch execution, that only fifty eſcaped with their lives[m]. The Britons, aſtoniſhed at this event, received a total defeat: Cheſter was obliged to ſurrender: And Adelfrid, purſuing his victory, made himſelf maſter of Bangor, and entirely demoliſhed the monaſtery; a building ſo extenſive, that there was a mile's diſtance from one gate of it to another; and it contained two thouſand one hundred monks, who are ſaid to have been there maintained by their own labour[n].

NOTWITHSTANDING Adelfrid's ſucceſs in war, he lived in inquietude on account of young Edwin, whom he had unjuſtly diſpoſſeſſed of the crown of Deïri. This prince, now grown to man's eſtate, wandered from place to place, in continual danger from the attempts of Adelfrid; and received at laſt protection in the court of Redwald, king of the Eaſt-Angles; where his engaging and gallant deportment procured him general eſteem and affection. Redwald, however, was ſtrongly ſolicited by the king of Northumberland to kill or deliver up his gueſt: Rich preſents were promiſed him, if he would comply; and war denounced againſt him, in caſe of his refuſal. After rejecting ſeveral meſſages of this kind, his generoſity began to yield to the motives of intereſt; and he retained the laſt ambaſſador, till he ſhould come to a reſolution in a caſe of ſuch importance. Edwin, informed of his friend's perplexity, was yet determined at all hazards to remain in Eaſt-Anglia; and thought, that, if the protection of that court failed him, it were better to die than prolong a life ſo much expoſed to the perſecutions of his powerful rival. This confidence in Redwald's honour and friendſhip, with his other accompliſhments, engaged the Queen on his ſide; and ſhe effectually repreſented to her huſband the infamy of delivering up to

[l] Brompton, p. 779. [m] Trivet. apud Spell. Conc. p. 111.
[n] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 2. W. Malmeſ. lib. 1. cap. 3.

certain

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certain destruction their royal guest, who had fled to them for protection against his cruel and jealous enemies [o]. Redwald, embracing more generous resolutions, thought it safest to prevent Adelfrid, before that prince was aware of his intention, and to attack him while he was yet unprepared for defence. He marched suddenly with an army into the kingdom of Northumberland, and fought a battle with Adelfrid; in which that monarch was defeated and killed, after revenging himself by the death of Regner, son of Redwald [p]. His own sons, Eanfrid, Oswald, and Oswy, yet infants, were carried into Scotland; and Edwin obtained possession of the crown of Northumberland.

Edwin was the greatest prince of the heptarchy in that age, and distinguished himself, both by his influence over the other kingdoms [q], and by the strict execution of justice in his own dominions. He reclaimed his subjects from the licentious life, to which they had been accustomed; and it was a common saying, that during his reign a woman or child might openly carry every where a purse of gold, without any danger of violence or robbery. There is a remarkable instance, transmitted to us, of the affection borne him by his servants. Cuichelme, king of Wessex, was his enemy; but finding himself unable to maintain open war against so gallant and powerful a prince, he determined to make use of treachery against him, and he employed one Eumer for that criminal purpose. The assassin, having obtained admittance, by pretending to deliver a message from Cuichelme, drew his dagger, and rushed upon the King. Lilla, an officer of his army, seeing his master's danger, and having no other means of defence, interposed with his own body between the King and Eumer's dagger, which was pushed with such violence, that, after piercing Lilla, it even

o W. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 3. H. Hunting. lib. 3. Bede.
p Bede, lib. 2. cap. 12. Brompton, p. 781.
q Chron. Sax. p. 27.

wounded

wounded Edwin: But before the aſſaſſin could renew his blow, he was diſpatched by the King's attendants. CHAP. I.

THE Eaſt-Angles conſpired againſt Redwald, their King; and having put him to death, they offered their crown to Edwin, of whoſe valour and capacity they had had experience, while he reſided among them. But Edwin, from a ſenſe of gratitude towards his benefactor, obliged them to ſubmit to Earpwold, the ſon of Redwald; and that prince preſerved his authority, though on a precarious footing, under the protection of the Northumbrian monarch [r].

EDWIN, after his acceſſion to the crown, married Ethelburga, the daughter of Ethelbert, King of Kent. This princeſs, emulating the glory of her mother Bertha, who had been the inſtrument for converting her huſband and his people to Chriſtianity, carried Paullinus, a learned biſhop, along with her [s]; and beſides ſtipulating a toleration for the exerciſe of her own religion, which was readily granted her, ſhe uſed every reaſon to perſuade the King to embrace it. Edwin, like a prudent prince, heſitated on the propoſal; but promiſed to examine the foundations of that doctrine; and declared, that, if he found them ſatisfactory, he was willing to be converted [t]. Accordingly he held ſeveral conferences with Paullinus; canvaſſed the arguments propounded with the wiſeſt of his counſellors; retired frequently from company, in order to revolve alone that important queſtion; and, after a ſerious and long enquiry, declared in favour of the Chriſtian religion [u]: The people ſoon after imitated his example. Beſides the authority and influence of the King, they were moved by another ſtriking example. Coifi, the high-prieſt, being converted after a public conference with Paullinus, led the way in deſtroying the

[r] Gul. Malmeſ. lib. 1. cap. 3.
[s] H. Hunting. lib. 3.
[t] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 9.
[u] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 9. Malmeſ. lib. 1. cap. 3.

images,

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images, which he had so long worshipped, and was forward in making this atonement for his past idolatry [w].

This able prince perished with his son, Osfrid, in a great battle which he fought against Penda, king of Mercia, and Cædwalla, king of the Britons [x]. That event, which happened in the forty-eighth year of Edwin's age and seventeenth of his reign [y], divided the monarchy of Northumberland, which that prince had united in his person. Eanfrid, the son of Adelfrid, returned with his brothers, Oswald and Oswy, from Scotland, and took possession of Bernicia, his paternal kingdom: Osric, Edwin's cousin-german, established himself in Deïri, the inheritance of his family; but to which the sons of Edwin had a preferable title. Eanfrid, the eldest surviving son, fled to Penda, by whom he was treacherously slain. The younger son, Vuscfræa, with Yffi, the grandson of Edwin, by Osfrid, sought protection in Kent, and not finding themselves in safety there, retired into France to King Dagobert, where they died [z].

Osric, King of Deïri, and Eanfrid of Bernicia returned to Paganism; and the whole people seem to have returned with them; since Paullinus, who was the first archbishop of York, and who had converted them, thought proper to retire with Ethelburga, the Queen Dowager, into Kent. Both these Northumbrian kings perished soon after, the first in battle against Cædwalla, the Briton; the second by the treachery of that prince. Oswald, the brother of Eanfrid, of the race of Bernicia, united again the kingdom of Northumberland in the year 634, and restored the Christian religion in his dominions. He gained a bloody and well-disputed battle against Cædwalla; the last vigorous effort which the Britons made against the Saxons. Oswald is much celebrated for his

[w] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 13. Brompton, Higden, lib. 5. [x] Matth. West. p. 114. Chron. Sax. p. 29. [y] W. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 3. [z] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 20.

sanctity

sanctity and charity by the Monkish historians; and they pretend, that his reliques wrought miracles, particularly the curing of a sick horse, which had approached the place of his interment [a].

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He died in battle against Penda, king of Mercia, and was succeeded by his brother, Oswy; who established himself in the government of all the Northumbrian kingdom, by putting to death Oswin, the son of Osric, the last king of the race of Deïri. His son Egfrid succeeded him; who perishing in battle against the Picts, without leaving any children, because Adelthrid, his wife, refused to violate her vow of chastity, Alfred, his natural brother, acquired possession of the kingdom, which he governed for nineteen years; and he left it to Osred, his son, a boy of eight years of age. This prince, after a reign of eleven years, was murdered by Kenred his kinsman, who, after enjoying the crown only a year, perished by a like fate. Osric, and after him Celwulph the son of Kenred, next mounted the throne, which the latter relinquished in the year 738, in favour of Eadbert his cousin-german, who, imitating his predecessor, abdicated the crown, and retired into a monastery. Oswolf, son of Eadbert, was slain in a sedition, a year after his accession to the crown; and Mollo, who was not of the royal family, seized the crown. He perished by the treachery of Ailred, a prince of the blood; and Ailred, having succeeded in his design upon the throne, was soon after expelled by his subjects. Ethelred, his successor, the son of Mollo, underwent a like fate. Celwold, the next king, the brother of Ailred, was deposed and slain by the people, and his place was filled by Osred, his nephew, who, after a short reign of a year, made way for Ethelbert, another son of Mollo, whose death was equally tragical with that of almost all his predecessors. After Ethelbert's death an universal anarchy prevailed in

[a] Bede, lib. 3. cap. 9.

CHAP. I. Northumberland; and the people, having, by ſo many fatal revolutions, loſt all attachment to their government and princes, were well prepared for ſubjection to a foreign yoke; which Egbert, king of Weſſex, finally impoſed upon them.

The Kingdom of EAST-ANGLIA.

THE hiſtory of this kingdom contains nothing memorable, except the converſion of Earpwold, the fourth king, and great-grandſon of Uffa, the founder of the monarchy. The authority of Edwin, king of Northumberland, on whom that prince entirely depended, engaged him to take this ſtep: But ſoon after, his wife, who was an idolatreſs, brought him back to her religion; and he was found unable to reſiſt thoſe allurements, which have ſeduced the wiſeſt of mankind. After his death, which was violent, like that of moſt of the Saxon princes, that did not early retire into monaſteries, Sigebert, his ſucceſſor, and half-brother, who had been educated in France, reſtored Chriſtianity, and introduced learning among the Eaſt-Angles. Some pretend that he founded the univerſity of Cambridge, or rather ſome ſchools in that place. It is almoſt impoſſible, and quite needleſs to be more particular in relating the tranſactions of the Eaſt-Angles. What inſtruction or entertainment can it give the reader to hear a long bead-roll of barbarous names, Egric, Annas, Ethelbert, Ethelwald, Aldulf, Elfwald, Beorne, Ethelred, Ethelbert, who ſucceſſively murdered, expelled, or inherited from each other, and obſcurely filled the throne of that kingdom. Ethelbert, the laſt of theſe princes was treacherouſly murdered by Offa, king of Mercia, in the year 792, and his ſtate was thenceforth united with that of Offa, as we ſhall relate preſently.

The

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The Kingdom of MERCIA.

MERCIA, the largeſt, if not the moſt powerful kingdom of the Heptarchy, comprehended all the middle counties of England; and as its frontiers extended to thoſe of all the other ſix kingdoms, as well as to Wales, it received its name from that circumſtance. Wibba, the ſon of Crida, founder of the monarchy, being placed on the throne by Ethelbert, king of Kent, governed his paternal dominions by a precarious authority; and after his death, Ceorl, his kinſman, was, by the influence of the Kentiſh monarch, preferred to his ſon, Penda, whoſe turbulent diſpoſition appeared dangerous to that prince. Penda was thus fifty years of age before he mounted the throne; and his temerity and martial diſpoſition were found nowiſe abated by time, experience, or reflection. He engaged in continual hoſtilities againſt all the neighbouring ſtates; and, by his injuſtice and violence, rendered himſelf equally odious to his own ſubjects and to ſtrangers. Sigebert, Egric, and Annas, three kings of Eaſt-Anglia, periſhed in battle againſt him; as did alſo Edwin and Oſwald, the two greateſt princes that had reigned over Northumberland. At laſt, Oſwy, brother to Oſwald, having defeated and ſlain him in a deciſive battle, freed the world from this ſanguinary tyrant. Peada, his ſon, obtained the crown of Mercia in 655, and lived under the protection of Oſwy, whoſe daughter he had eſpouſed. This princeſs was educated in the Chriſtian faith, and ſhe employed her influence with ſucceſs, in converting her huſband and his ſubjects to that religion. Thus the fair ſex have had the merit of introducing the Chriſtian doctrine into all the moſt conſiderable kingdoms of the Saxon Heptarchy. Peada

died

CHAP. I. died a violent death [b]. His ſon, Wolfhere, ſucceeded to the government; and after having reduced to dependance the kingdoms of Eſſex and Eaſt-Anglia, he left the crown to his brother, Ethelred, who, though a lover of peace, ſhowed himſelf not unfit for military enterprizes. Beſides making a ſucceſsful expedition into Kent, he repulſed Egfrid, king of Northumberland, who had invaded his dominions; and he ſlew in battle Elfwin, the brother of that prince. Deſirous, however, of compoſing all animoſities with Egfrid, he payed him a ſum of money, as a compenſation for the loſs of his brother. After a proſperous reign of thirty years, he reſigned the crown to Kendred, ſon of Wolfhere, and retired into the monaſtery of Bardney [c]. Kendred returned the preſent of the crown to Ceolred, the ſon of Ethelred; and making a pilgrimage to Rome, paſſed his life there in pennance and devotion. The place of Ceolred was ſupplied by Ethelbald, great-grand-nephew to Penda by Alwy, his brother; and this prince, being ſlain in a mutiny, was ſucceeded by Offa, who was a degree more remote from Penda, by Eawa, another brother.

THIS prince, who mounted the throne in 755 [d], had ſome great qualities, and was ſucceſsful in his warlike enterprizes againſt Lothaire, king of Kent, and Kenwulph, king of Weſſex. He defeated the former in a bloody battle at Otford upon the Darent, and reduced his kingdom to a ſtate of dependance: He gained a victory over the latter at Benſington in Oxfordſhire; and conquering that county, together with that of Gloceſter, annexed both to his other dominions. But all theſe ſucceſſes were ſtained by his treacherous murder of Ethelbert, king of the Eaſt-Angles, and his violent ſeizing of that

[b] Hugo Candidus, p. 4. ſays that he was treacherouſly murdered by his queen, from whoſe perſuaſion he had embraced Chriſtianity; but this account of the matter is found in that hiſtorian alone.

[c] Bede, lib. 5. [d] Chron. Sax. p. 59.

kingdom.

kingdom. This young prince, who is said to have possessed great merit, had paid his addresses to Elfrida, the daughter of Offa, and was invited with all his retinue to Hereford, in order to solemnize the nuptials. Amidst the joy and festivity of these entertainments, he was seized by Offa, and secretly beheaded: And though Elfrida, who abhorred her father's treachery, had time to give warning to the East-Anglian nobility, who escaped into their own country, Offa, having extinguished the royal family, succeeded in his design of subduing that kingdom [e]. The perfidious prince, desirous of re-establishing his character in the world, and perhaps of appeasing the remorses of his own conscience, payed great court to the clergy, and practised all the monkish devotions, so much esteemed in that ignorant and superstitious age. He gave the tenth of his goods to the church [f]; bestowed rich donations on the cathedral of Hereford; and even made a pilgrimage to Rome, where his great power and riches could not fail of procuring him the papal absolution. The better to ingratiate himself with the sovereign pontiff, he engaged to pay him a yearly donation for the support of an English college at Rome [g], and in order to raise the sum, he imposed a tax of a penny on each house possessed of thirty pence a year. This imposition, being afterwards levied on all England, was commonly denominated Peter's pence [h]; and though conferred at first as a gift, was afterwards claimed as a tribute by the Roman pontiff. Carrying his hypocrisy still farther, Offa, feigning to be directed by a vision from heaven, discovered at Verulam the reliques of St. Alban, the martyr, and endowed a magnificent monastery in that place [i]. Moved by all these acts of piety, Malmesbury, one of the best of

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[e] Brompton, p. 750, 751, 752 [f] Spell. Conc. p. 308. Brompton, p. 776. [g] Spell. Conc. p. 230, 310, 312. [h] Higden, lib 5. [i] Ingulph. p. 5 W. Malmes. lib. 1. cap. 4.

CHAP. I. the old Engliſh hiſtorians, declares himſelf at a loſs to determine [k] whether the merits or crimes of this prince preponderated. Offa died, after a reign of thirty-nine years, in 794 [l].

THIS prince was become ſo conſiderable in the Heptarchy, that the emperor Charlemagne entered into an alliance and friendſhip with him; a circumſtance, which did honour to Offa; as diſtant princes at that time had uſually little communication with each other. That emperor being a great lover of learning and learned men, in an age very barren of that ornament, Offa, at his deſire, ſent him over Alcuin, a clergyman much celebrated for his knowledge, who received great honours from Charlemagne, and even became his preceptor in the ſciences. The chief reaſon, why he had at firſt deſired the company of Alcuin, was that he might oppoſe his learning to the hereſy of Felix, biſhop of Urgel in Catalonia; who maintained, that Jeſus Chriſt, conſidered in his human nature, could, more properly, be denominated the adoptive than the natural ſon of God [m]. This hereſy was condemned in the council of Francfort, held in 794, and conſiſting of 300 biſhops. Such were the queſtions which were agitated in that age, and which employed the attention, not only of cloyſtered ſcholars, but of the wiſeſt and greateſt princes [n].

EGFRITH ſucceeded to his father, Offa, but ſurvived him only five months [o]; when he made way for Kenulph, a deſcendant of the royal family. This prince waged war againſt Kent; and taking Egbert, the king, priſoner, he cut off his hands, and put out his eyes; leaving Cuthred, his own brother, in poſſeſſion of the crown of that

[k] Lib. 1. cap. 4. [l] Chron. Sax. p. 65. [m] Dupin, cent. 8. chap. 4. [n] Offa, in order to protect his country from Wales, drew a rampart or ditch of a hundred miles in length from Faſingwerke in Flintſhire to the South ſea near Briſtol. See *Speed's Deſcription of Wales.*

[o] Ingulph. p. 6.

kingdom,

kingdom. Kenulph was killed in an insurrection of the East-Anglians, whose crown his predecessor, Offa, had usurped. He left his son, Kenelm, a minor; who was murdered the same year by his sister, Quendrade, who had entertained the ambitious views of assuming the government [p]. But she was supplanted by her uncle, Ceolulf; who, two years after, was dethroned by Beornulf. The reign of this usurper, who was not of the royal family, was short and unfortunate: He was defeated by the West-Saxons, and killed by his own subjects, the East-Angles [q]. Ludican, his successor, underwent the same fate [r]; and Wiglaff, who mounted this unstable throne, and found every thing in the utmost confusion, could not withstand the fortune of Egbert, who united all the Saxon kingdoms into one great monarchy. CHAP. I.

The Kingdom of ESSEX.

THIS kingdom made no great figure in the Heptarchy; and the history of it is very imperfect. Sleda succeeded to his father, Erkenwin, the founder of the monarchy; and made way for his son, Sebert, who, being nephew to Ethelbert, king of Kent, was persuaded by that prince to embrace the Christian faith [s]. His sons and conjunct successors, Sexted and Seward, relapsed into idolatry, and were soon after slain in a battle against the West-Saxons. To shew the rude manner of living in that age; Bede tells us [t], that these two kings expressed great desire to eat the white bread, distributed by Mellitus, the bishop, at the communion [u]. But on his refusing them, unless they would submit to be baptized, they expelled him their dominions. The names of the other

[p] Ingulph. p. 7. Brompton, p. 776. [q] Ingulph. p. 7. [r] Ann. Beverl. p. 87. [s] Chron. Sax. p. 24. [t] Lib. 2. cap. 5. [u] H. Hunting. lib. 3. Brompton, p. 738, 743. Bede.

CHAP. I. princes, who reigned ſucceſſively in Eſſex, are Sigebert the little, Sigebert the good, who reſtored Chriſtianity, Swithelm, Sigheri, Offa. This laſt prince, having made a vow of chaſtity, notwithſtanding his marriage with Keneſwitha, a Mercian princeſs, daughter to Penda, went in pilgrimage to Rome, and ſhut himſelf up during the reſt of his life in a cloyſter. Selred, his ſucceſſor, reigned thirty-eight years; and was the laſt of the royal line: The failure of which threw the kingdom into great confuſion, and reduced it to dependance under Mercia [w]. Switherd firſt acquired the crown, by the conceſſion of the Mercian princes; and his death made way for Sigeric, who ended his life in a pilgrimage to Rome. His ſucceſſor, Sigered, unable to defend his kingdom, ſubmitted to the victorious arms of Egbert.

The Kingdom of SUSSEX.

THE hiſtory of this kingdom, the ſmalleſt in the Heptarchy, is ſtill more imperfect than that of Eſſex. Ælla, the founder of the monarchy, left the crown to his ſon, Ciſſa, who is chiefly remarkable for his long reign of ſeventy-ſix years. During his time, the South-Saxons fell almoſt into a total dependance on the kingdom of Weſſex; and we ſcarcely know the names of the princes, who were poſſeſſed of this titular ſovereignty. Adelwalch, the laſt of them, was ſubdued in battle by Ceadwalla, king of Weſſex, and was ſlain in the action; leaving two infant ſons, who, falling into the hand of the conqueror, were murdered by him. The abbot of Redford oppoſed the order for this execution; but could only prevail on Ceadwalla to ſuſpend it, till they ſhould be baptized. Berethun and Audhun, two noblemen of character, reſiſted ſome time the violence of

[w] Malmeſ. lib. 1. cap. 6.

the

the Weſt-Saxons; but their oppoſition ſerved only to prolong the miſeries of their country; and the ſubduing of this kingdom, was the firſt ſtep, which the Weſt-Saxons made towards acquiring the ſole monarchy of England [x].

The Kingdom of WESSEX.

THE kingdom of Weſſex, which finally ſwallowed up all the other Saxon ſtates, met with great reſiſtance on its firſt eſtabliſhment; and the Britons, who were now enured to arms, yielded not tamely their poſſeſſions to thoſe invaders. Cerdic, the founder of the monarchy, and his ſon, Kenric, fought many ſucceſsful, and ſome unſucceſsful battles, againſt the natives; and the martial ſpirit, common to all the Saxons, was, by means of theſe hoſtilities, carried to the greateſt height among this tribe. Ceaulin, who was the ſon and ſucceſſor of Kenric, and who began his reign in 560, was ſtill more ambitious and enterprizing than his predeceſſors; and by waging continual war againſt the Britons, he added a great part of the counties of Devon and Somerſet to his other dominions. Carried along by the tide of ſucceſs, he invaded the other Saxon ſtates in his neighbourhood, and becoming terrible to all, he provoked a general confederacy againſt him. This alliance proved ſucceſsful under the conduct of Ethelbert, king of Kent; and Ceaulin, who had loſt the affections of his own ſubjects by his violent diſpoſition, and had now fallen into contempt from his misfortunes, was expelled the throne [y], and died in exile and miſery. Cuichelme, and Cuthwin, his ſons, governed jointly the kingdom, till the expulſion of the latter in 591, and the death of the former in 593, made way for Cealric, to whom ſucceeded Ceobald in 593, by

[x] Brompton, p. 800. [y] Chron. Sax. p. 22.

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whose death, which happened in 611, Kynegils inherited the crown. This prince embraced Christianity [z], through the persuasion of Oswald, king of Northumberland, who had married his daughter, and who had attained a great ascendant in the heptarchy. Kenwalch next succeeded to the monarchy, and dying in 672, left the succession so much disputed, that Sexburga, his widow, a woman of spirit [a], kept possession of the government till her death, which happened two years after. Escwin then peaceably acquired the crown; and, after a short reign of two years, made way for Kentwin, who governed nine years. Ceodwalla, his successor, mounted not the throne without opposition; but proved a great prince, according to the ideas of those times; that is, he was enterprizing, warlike, and successful. He entirely subdued the kingdom of Sussex, and annexed it to his own dominions. He made inroads into Kent; but met with resistance from Widred, the king, who proved successful against Mollo, brother to Ceodwalla, and slew him in a skirmish. Ceodwalla at last, tired with wars and bloodshed, was seized with a fit of devotion; bestowed several endowments on the church; and made a pilgrimage to Rome, where he received baptism, and died in 689. Ina, his successor, inherited the military virtues of Ceodwalla, and added to them the more valuable ones of justice, policy, and prudence. He made war upon the Britons in Somerset; and having finally subdued that province, he treated the vanquished with an humanity, hitherto unknown to the Saxon conquerors. He allowed the proprietors to retain possession of their lands, encouraged marriages and alliances between them and his ancient subjects, and gave them the privilege of being governed by the same laws. These laws he augmented and ascer-

[z] Higden, lib. 5. Chron. Sax. p. 15. Ann. Beverl. p. 94.
[a] Bede, lib. 4. cap. 12. Chron. Sax. p. 41.

tained;

tained; and though he was disturbed by some insurrections at home, his long reign of thirty-seven years may be regarded as one of the most glorious and most prosperous of the heptarchy. In the decline of his age, he made a pilgrimage to Rome; and after his return, shut himself up in a cloyster, where he died.

THOUGH the kings of Wessex had always been princes of the blood, descended from Cerdic, the founder of the monarchy, the order of succession had been far from exact; and a more remote prince had often found means to mount the throne, in preference to one descended from a nearer branch of the royal family. Ina, therefore, having no children of his own, and lying much under the influence of Ethelburga, his queen, left by will the succession to Adelard, her brother, who was his remote kinsman: But this destination did not take place without some difficulty. Oswald, a prince more nearly allied to the crown, took arms against Adelard; but he being suppressed, and dying soon after, the title of Adelard was not any farther disputed; and in the year 741, he was succeeded by his cousin, Cudred. The reign of this prince was distinguished by a great victory, which he obtained, by means of Edelhun, his general, over Ethelbald, king of Mercia. His death made way for Sigebert, his kinsman, who governed so ill, that his people rose in an insurrection, and dethroned him, crowning Cenulph in his stead. The exiled prince found a refuge with duke Cumbran, governor of Hampshire; who, that he might add new obligations to Sigebert, gave him many salutary counsels for his future conduct, accompanied with some reprehensions for the past. But these were so much resented by the ungrateful prince, that he conspired against the life of his protector, and treacherously murdered him. After this infamous action, he was forsaken by all the world; and skulking about in the wilds and forests, was at last discovered by a servant of

CHAP. I. Cumbran's, who inſtantly took revenge upon him for the murder of his maſter [b].

Cenulph, who had obtained the crown on the expulſion of Sigebert, was fortunate in many expeditions againſt the Britons of Cornwal; but afterwards loſt ſome reputation by his ill ſucceſs againſt Offa, king of Mercia [c]. Kynehard alſo, brother to the depoſed Sigebert, gave him diſturbance; and though expelled the kingdom, he hovered on the frontiers, and watched an opportunity for attacking his rival. The king had an intrigue with a young woman, who lived at Merton in Surrey; whither having ſecretly retired, he was on a ſudden inviroued, in the night-time, by Kynehard and his followers, and after making a vigorous reſiſtance, was murdered, with all his attendants. The nobility and people of the neighbourhood, riſing next day in arms, took revenge on Kynehard for the ſlaughter of their king, and put every one to the ſword, who had been engaged in that criminal enterprize. This event happened in 784.

Brithric next obtained poſſeſſion of the government, though remotely deſcended from the royal family; but he enjoyed not that dignity without inquietude. Eoppa, nephew to king Ina, by his brother Ingild, who died before that prince, had begot Eata, father to Alchmond, from whom ſprung Egbert [d], a young man of the moſt promiſing hopes, who gave great jealouſy to Brithric, the reigning prince, both becauſe he ſeemed by his birth better intitled to the crown, and becauſe he had acquired, to an eminent degree, the affections of the people. Egbert, ſenſible of his danger from the ſuſpicions of Brithric, ſecretly withdrew into France [e]; where he was well received by Charlemagne. By living in the court, and ſerving in the armies of that prince, the moſt able and

[b] Higden, lib. 5. W. Malmeſ. lib. 1. cap. 2. [c] W. Malmeſ. lib. 1. cap. 2. [d] Curon. Sax. p. 16. [e] H. Hunting. lib. 4.

moſt

moſt generous that had appeared in Europe during ſeveral ages, he acquired thoſe accompliſhments, which afterwards enabled him to make ſuch a ſhining figure on the throne. And familiarizing himſelf to the manners of the French, who, as Malmeſbury obſerves [f], were eminent both for valour and civility, above all the weſtern nations, he learned to poliſh the rudeneſs and barbarity of the Saxon character: His early misfortunes thus proved of ſingular advantage to him.

It was not long ere Egbert had opportunities of diſplaying his natural and acquired talents. Brithric, King of Weſſex, had married Eadburga, natural daughter of Offa, king of Mercia, a profligate woman, equally infamous for cruelty and for incontinence. Having great influence over her huſband, ſhe often inſtigated him to deſtroy ſuch of the nobility as were obnoxious to her; and where this expedient failed, ſhe ſcrupled not being herſelf active in traiterous attempts againſt them. She had mixed a cup of poiſon for a young nobleman, who had acquired her huſband's friendſhip, and had on that account become the object of her jealouſy: But unfortunately, the king drank of the fatal cup along with his favourite, and ſoon after expired [g]. This event, joined to her other crimes, rendered Eadburga ſo odious, that ſhe was obliged to fly into France; whence Egbert was at the ſame time recalled by the nobility, in order to aſcend the throne of his anceſtors [h]. He attained that dignity in the laſt year of the eighth century.

In the kingdoms of the heptarchy, an exact rule of ſucceſſion was either unknown or not ſtrictly obſerved; and thence the reigning prince was continually agitated with jealouſy againſt all the princes of the blood, whom

[f] Lib. 2. cap. 11. Aſſer. in vita Alfredi, p. 3. ex edit. Camdeni. A. D. 800. Brompton, p. 801.

[g] Higden, lib. 5. M. Weſt. p. 152.

[h] Chron. Sax.

he

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he ſtill conſidered as rivals, and whoſe death alone could give him entire ſecurity in his poſſeſſion of the throne. From this fatal cauſe, together with the admiration of the monaſtic life, and the opinion of merit, attending the preſervation of chaſtity even in a married ſtate, the royal families had been entirely extinguiſhed in all the kingdoms except that of Weſſex; and the emulations, ſuſpicions, and conſpiracies, which had formerly been confined to the princes of the blood alone, were now diffuſed among all the nobility in the ſeveral Saxon ſtates. Egbert was the ſole deſcendant of thoſe firſt conquerors who ſubdued Britain, and who enhanced their authority by claiming a pedigree from Woden, the ſupreme divinity of their anceſtors. But that prince, though invited by this favourable circumſtance to make attempts on the neighbouring Saxons, gave them for ſome time no diſturbance, and rather choſe to turn his arms againſt the Britons in Cornwal, whom he defeated in ſeveral battles [i]. He was recalled from the conqueſt of that country by an invaſion made upon his dominions by Bernulf, King of Mercia.

THE Mercians, before the acceſſion of Egbert, had very nearly attained the abſolute ſovereignty over the heptarchy: They had reduced the Eaſt-Angles under ſubjection, and eſtabliſhed tributary princes in the kingdoms of Kent and Eſſex. Northumberland was involved in anarchy; and no ſtate of any conſequence remained but that of Weſſex, which, much inferior in extent to Mercia, was ſupported ſolely by the great qualities of its ſovereign. Egbert led his army againſt the invaders; and encountering them at Ellandun in Wiltſhire, obtained a complete victory, and by the great ſlaughter which he made of them in their flight, gave a mortal blow to the power of the Mercians. Whilſt he himſelf, in proſecution of his victory, entered their country on the ſide of Oxfordſhire,

[i] Chron. Sax. p. 69.

and

and threatened the heart of their dominions; he sent an army into Kent, commanded by Ethelwolph, his eldest son [k]; and expelling Baldred, the tributary king, soon made himself master of that country. The kingdom of Essex was conquered with equal facility; and the East-Angles, from their hatred to the Mercian government, which had been establ shed over them by treachery and violence, and probably exercised with tyranny, immediately rose in arms, and craved the protection of Egbert [l]. Bernulf, the Mercian king, who marched against them, was defeated and slain; and two years after, Ludecan, his successor, met with the same fate. These insurrections and calamities facilitated the enterprizes of Egbert, who advanced into the center of the Mercian territories, and made easy conquests over a dispirited and divided people. In order to engage them more easily to submission, he allowed Wiglef, their countryman, to retain the title of king, whilst he himself exercised the real powers of sovereignty [m]. The anarchy, which prevailed in Northumberland, tempted him to carry still farther his victorious arms; and the inhabitants, unable to resist his power, and desirous of possessing some established form of government, were forward, on his first appearance, to send deputies, who submitted to his authority, and swore allegiance to him as their sovereign. Egbert, however, still allowed to Northumberland, as he had done to Mercia and East-Anglia, the power of electing a king, who paid him tribute, and was dependant on him.

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Thus were united all the kingdoms of the heptarchy in one great state, near four hundred years after the first arrival of the Saxons in Britain; and the fortunate arms and prudent policy of Egbert at last effectuated what had been so often attempted in vain by so many princes [n].

[k] Ethelwerd, lib. 3. cap. 2.
[l] Ibid. lib. 3. cap. 3.
[m] Ingulph. p. 7, 8, 10.
[n] Chron. Sax. p. 71.

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THE Saxons, though they had been ſo long ſettled in the iſland, ſeem not as yet to have been much improved beyond their German anceſtors, either in arts, civility, knowledge, humanity, juſtice, or obedience to the laws. Even Chriſtianity, though it opened the way to connexions between them and the more poliſhed ſtates of Europe, had not hitherto been very effectual, in baniſhing their ignorance, or ſoftening their barbarous manners. As they received that doctrine through the corrupted channels of Rome, it carried along with it a great mixture of credulity and ſuperſtition, equally deſtructive to the underſtanding and to morals. The reverence towards ſaints and reliques ſeems to have almoſt ſupplanted the adoration of the ſupreme Being: Monaſtic obſervances were eſteemed more meritorious than the active virtues: The knowledge of natural cauſes was neglected from the univerſal belief of miraculous interpoſitions and judgments: Bounty to the church atoned for every violence againſt ſociety: And the remorſes for cruelty, murder, treachery, aſſaſſination, and the more robuſt vices, were appeaſed, not by amendment of life, but by penances, ſervility to the monks, and an abject and illiberal devotion P. The reverence

° Chron. Sax. p. 71.

P Theſe abuſes were common to all the European churches; but the prieſts in Italy, Spain, and Gaul, made ſome atonement for them by other advantages, which they rendered ſociety. For ſeveral ages, they were almoſt all Romans,

reverence for the clergy had been carried to such a height, that, wherever a person appeared in a sacerdotal habit, though on the highway, the people flocked around him; and showing him all marks of profound respect, received every word he uttered as the most sacred oracle [q]. Even the military virtues, so inherent in all the Saxon tribes, began to be neglected; and the nobility, preferring the security and sloth of the cloyster to the tumults and glory of war, valued themselves chiefly on endowing monasteries, of which they assumed the government [r]. The several kings too, being extremely impoverished by continual benefactions to the church, to which the states of their kingdoms had weakly consented, could bestow no rewards on valour or military services, and retained not even sufficient influence to support their government [s].

ANOTHER inconvenience, which attended this corrupt species of Christianity, was the superstitious attachment to Rome, and the gradual subjection of the kingdom to a foreign jurisdiction. The Britons, having never acknowledged any subordination to the Roman pontiff, had conducted all ecclesiastical government by their domestic synods and councils [t]: But the Saxons, receiving their religion from Roman monks, were taught at the same time a profound reverence for that see, and were naturally led to regard it as the capital of their religion. Pilgrimages to Rome were represented as the most meritorious acts of devotion. Not only noblemen and ladies of rank undertook this tedious journey [u]; but kings themselves,

Romans, or, in other words, the ancient natives; and they preserved the Roman language and laws, with some remains of the former civility. But the priests in the heptarchy, after the first missionaries, were wholly Saxon, and almost as ignorant and barbarous as the laity. They contributed, therefore, little to the improvement of the society in knowledge or the arts.

[q] Bede, lib. 3. cap. 26. [r] Ibid. lib. 5. cap. 23. Epistola Bedæ ad Egbert. [s] Bedæ Epist. ad Egbert. [t] Append. to Bede, numb. 10. ex edit. 1722. Spelm. Conc. p. 108, 109. [u] Bede, lib. 5. cap. 7.

abdicating

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abdicating their crowns, fought for a ſecure paſſport to heaven at the feet of the Roman pontiff. New reliques, perpetually ſent from that endleſs mint of ſuperſtition, and magnified by lying miracles, invented in convents, operated on the aſtoniſhed minds of the multitude. And every prince has attained the eulogies of the monks, the only hiſtorians of thoſe ages, not in proportion to his civil and military virtues, but to his devoted attachment towards their order, and his ſuperſtitious reverence for Rome.

THE ſovereign pontiff, encouraged by this blindneſs and ſubmiſſive diſpoſition of the people, advanced every day in his encroachments on the independance of the Engliſh churches. Wilfrid, biſhop of Lindisferne, the ſole prelate of the Northumbrian kingdom, encreaſed this ſubjection in the eighth century, by his making an appeal to Rome againſt the deciſions of an Engliſh ſynod, which had abridged his dioceſe by the erection of ſome new biſhopricsʷ. Agatho, the pope, readily embraced this precedent of an appeal to his court; and Wilfrid, though the haughtieſt and moſt luxurious prelate of his age ˣ, having obtained with the people the character of ſanctity, finally prevailed in the conteſt.

THE great topic, by which Wilfrid confounded the imaginations of men, was, that St. Peter, to whoſe cuſtody the keys of heaven were entruſted, would certainly refuſe admittance to every one who ſhould be wanting in reſpect to his ſucceſſor. This conceit, well ſuited to vulgar conceptions, made great impreſſion on the people during ſeveral ages; and has not even at preſent loſt all influence in the catholic countries.

HAD this abject ſuperſtition produced general peace and tranquillity, it had made ſome atonement for the ills at-

ʷ See Appendix to Bede, numb. 19. Higden, lib. 5. ˣ Eddius vita Vilfr. § 24 60.

tending

tending it; but, added to the usual avidity of men for power and riches, it engendered frivolous controversies in theology, which were so much the more fatal, as they admitted not, like the others, of any final determination from established possession. The disputes, excited in Briton, were of the most ridiculous kind, and entirely worthy of those ignorant and barbarous ages. There were some intricacies, observed by all the Christian churches, in adjusting the day of keeping Easter; which depended on a complicated consideration of the course of the sun and moon: And it happened that the missionaries, who had converted the Scots and Britons, had followed a different calendar from that which was observed at Rome, in the age when Augustine converted the Saxons. The priests also of all the Christian churches were accustomed to shave part of their head; but the form given to this tonsure, was different in the former from what was practised in the latter. The Scots and Britons pleaded the antiquity of *their* usages: The Romans, and their disciples, the Saxons, insisted on the universality of *theirs*. That Easter must necessarily be kept by a rule, which comprehended both the day of the year and age of the moon, was agreed by all; that the tonsure of a priest could not be omitted without the utmost impiety, was a point undisputed: But the Romans and Saxons called their antagonists schismatics; because they celebrated Easter on the very day of the full moon in March, if that day fell on a Sunday, instead of waiting till the Sunday following; and because they shaved their whole forehead from ear to ear, instead of making that tonsure on the crown of the head, and in a circular form. In order to render their antagonists odious, they affirmed, that, once in seven years, they concurred with the Jews in the time of celebrating that festival [y]: And that they might re-

[y] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 19.

commend

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commend their own form of tonſure, they maintained, that it imitated ſymbolically the crown of thorns worn by Chriſt in his paſſion; whereas the other form was invented by Simon Magus, without any regard to that repreſentation [z]. Theſe controverſies had, from the beginning, excited ſuch animoſity between the Britiſh and Romiſh prieſts, that, inſtead of concurring in their endeavours to convert the idolatrous Saxons, they refuſed all communion together, and each regarded his opponent as no better than a Pagan [a]. The diſpute laſted more than a century; and was at laſt finiſhed, not by men's diſcovering the folly of it, which would have been too great an effort for human reaſon to accompliſh, but by the entire victory of the Romiſh ritual over the Scotch and Britiſh [b]. Wilfrid, biſhop of Lindisferne, acquired great merit, both with the court of Rome and with all the ſouthern Saxons, by expelling the quartodeciman ſchiſm, as it was called, from the Northumbrian kingdom, into which the neighbourhood of the Scots had formerly introduced it [c].

THEODORE, archbiſhop of Canterbury, called, in the year 680, a ſynod at Hatfield, conſiſting of all the biſhops in Britain [d]; where was accepted and ratified the decree of the Lateran council, ſummoned by Martin, againſt the hereſy of the Monothelites. The council and ſynod maintained, in oppoſition to theſe heretics, that, though the divine and human nature in Chriſt made but one perſon; yet had they different inclinations, wills, acts, and ſentiments, and that the unity of the perſon implied not any unity in the conſciouſneſs [e]. This opinion it ſeems ſomewhat difficult to comprehend; and no one, unacquainted with the eccleſiaſtical hiſtory of thoſe

[z] Bede, lib. 5. cap. 21. Eddius, § 24. [a] Bede, lib. 2. cap. 2, 4, 20. Eddius, § 12. [b] Bede, lib. 5. cap. 16, 22. [c] Bede, lib 3. cap. 25. Eddius, § 12. [d] Spell. Conc. vol. 1. p. 168. [e] Ibid. p. 171.

ages, could imagine the height of zeal and violence, with which it was then inculcated. The decree of the Lateran council calls the Monothelites impious, execrable, wicked, abominable, and even diabolical; and curses and anathematizes them to all eternity [f].

The Saxons, from the first introduction of Christianity among them, had admitted the use of images; and perhaps, that religion, without some of those exterior ornaments, had not made so quick a progress with these idolaters: But they had not paid any species of worship or address to images; and this abuse never prevailed among Christians, till it received the sanction of the second council of Nice.

[f] Spell. Conc. vol. 1. p. 172, 173, 174.

CHAP. II.

Egbert——Ethelwolf——Ethelbald and Ethelbert——Ethered——Alfred the Great——Edward the elder——Athelſtan——Edmund——Edred——Edwy——Edgar——Edward the Martyr.

EGBERT.

CHAP. II. 827.

THE Kingdoms of the Heptarchy, though united by ſo recent a conqueſt, ſeemed to be firmly cemented into one ſtate under Egbert; and the inhabitants of the ſeveral provinces had loſt all deſire of revolting from that conqueror, or of reſtoring their former independent governments. Their language was every where nearly the ſame, their cuſtoms, laws, inſtitutions civil and religious; and as the race of the ancient kings was totally extinct in all the ſubjected ſtates, the people readily transferred their allegiance to a prince, who ſeemed to merit it, by the ſplendor of his victories, the vigour of his adminiſtration, and the ſuperior nobility of his birth. An union alſo in government opened to them the agreeable proſpect of future tranquillity; and it appeared more probable, that they would thenceforth become formidable to their neighbours, than be expoſed to their inroads and devaſtations. But theſe flattering views were ſoon overcaſt by the appearance of the Danes, who, during ſome centuries, kept the Anglo-Saxons in perpetual inquietude, committed the moſt barbarous ravages upon them, and at laſt reduced them to grievous ſervitude.

THE emperor Charlemagne, though naturally generous and humane, had been induced by bigotry to exerciſe great ſeverities upon the Pagan Saxons in Germany, whom he ſubdued; and beſides often ravaging their country

try with fire and sword, he had in cool blood decimated all the inhabitants for their revolts, and had obliged them, by the most rigorous edicts, to make a seeming compliance with the christian doctrine. That religion, which had easily made its way among the British-Saxons by insinuation and address, appeared shocking to their German brethren, when imposed on them by the violence of Charlemagne; and the most generous and warlike of these Pagans had fled northward into Jutland, in order to escape the fury of his persecutions. Meeting there with a people of similar manners, they were readily received among them; and they soon stimulated the natives to concur in enterprizes, which both promised revenge on the haughty conqueror, and afforded subsistence to those numerous inhabitants, with which the northern countries were now o'erburthened [g]. They invaded the provinces of France, which were exposed by the degeneracy and dissentions of Charlemagne's posterity; and being there known under the general name of Normans, which they received from their northern situation, they became the terror of all the maritime and even of the inland countries. They were also tempted to visit England in their frequent excursions; and being able, by sudden inroads, to make great progress over a people, who were not defended by any naval force, who had relaxed their military institutions, and who were sunk into a superstition, which had become odious to the Danes and ancient Saxons, they made no distinction in their hostilities between the French and English kingdoms. Their first appearance in this island was in the year 787 [h], when Brithric reigned in Wessex. A small body of them landed in that kingdom, with a view of learning the state of the country; and when the magistrate of the place questioned them con- CHAP. II.

[g] Ypod. Neustria, p. 414. [h] Chron. Sax. p. 64.

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cerning their enterprize, and ſummoned them to appear before the king, and account for their intentions; they killed him, and flying to their ſhips, eſcaped into their own country. The next alarm was given to Northumberland in the year 794 [i]; when a body of theſe pirates pillaged a monaſtery; but their ſhips being much damaged by a ſtorm, and their leader ſlain in a ſkirmiſh, they were at laſt defeated by the inhabitants, and the remainder of them put to the ſword. Five years after Egbert had eſtabliſhed his monarchy over England, the Danes landed in the Iſle of Shepey, and having pillaged it, eſcaped with impunity [k]. They were not ſo fortunate in their next year's enterprize, when they diſembarked from thirty-five ſhips, and were encountered by Egbert, at Charmouth in Dorſetſhire. The battle was bloody; but though the Danes loſt great numbers, they maintained the poſt, which they had taken, and thence made good their retreat to their ſhips [l]. Having learned by experience, that they muſt expect a vigorous reſiſtance from this warlike prince, they entered into an alliance with the Britons of Cornwal; and landing two years after in that country, made an inroad with their confederates into the county of Devon; but were met at Hengeſdown by Egbert, and totally defeated [m]. While England remained in this ſtate of inquietude, and defended itſelf more by temporary expedients than by any regular plan of adminiſtration, Egbert, who alone was capable of providing effectually againſt this new evil, unfortunately died; and left the government to his ſon, Ethelwolf.

832.

838.

[i] Chron. Sax. p. 66. Alur. Beverl. p. 108.
[k] Chron. Sax. p. 72.
[l] Ibid. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 2.
[m] Chron. Sax. p. 72.

ETHEL-

CHAP. II.

ETHELWOLF.

THIS prince had neither the abilities nor the vigour of his father; and was better qualified for governing a convent than a kingdom [n]. He began his reign with making a partition of his dominions, and delivering over to his eldeſt ſon, Athelſtan, the new conquered provinces of Eſſex, Kent, and Suſſex. But no inconveniencies ſeem to have ariſen from this partition; as the continual terror of the Daniſh invaſions prevented all domeſtic diſſention. A fleet of theſe ravagers, conſiſting of thirty-three ſail, appeared at Southampton; but were repulſed with loſs by Wolfhere, governor of the neighbouring county [o]. The ſame year, Æthelhelm, governor of Dorſetſhire, routed another band which had diſembarked at Portſmouth; but he obtained the victory after a furious engagement, and he bought it with the loſs of his life [p]. Next year, the Danes made ſeveral inroads into England; and fought battles, or rather ſkirmiſhes, in Eaſt-Anglia and Lindeſey and Kent; where, though they were ſometimes repulſed and defeated, they always obtained their end, of committing ſpoil upon the country, and carrying off their booty. They avoided coming to a general engagement, which was not ſuited to their plan of operations. Their veſſels were ſmall, and ran eaſily up the creeks and rivers; where they drew them aſhore, and having formed an entrenchment around them, which they guarded with part of their number, the remainder ſcattered themſelves every where, and carrying off the inhabitants and cattle and goods, they haſtened to their ſhips, and quickly diſappeared. If the military force of the county was aſſembled, (for there was no time for

[n] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 2. [o] Chron. Sax. p. 73. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 3. [p] Chron. Sax. p. 73. H. Hunting. lib. 5.

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troops to march from a distance) the Danes either were able to repulse them and to continue their ravages with impunity, or they betook themselves to their vessels; and setting sail, suddenly invaded some distant quarter, which was not prepared for their reception. Every part of England was held in continual alarm; and the inhabitants of one county durst not give assistance to those of another, lest their own families and property should in the mean time be exposed by their absence to the fury of these barbarous ravagers [q]. All orders of men were involved in this ruin; and the priests and monks, who had been commonly spared in the domestic quarrels of the heptarchy, were the chief objects on which the Danish idolaters exercised their rage and animosity. Every season of the year was dangerous; and the absence of the enemy was no reason why any man could esteem himself a moment in safety.

These incursions had now become almost annual; when the Danes, encouraged by their successes against France as well as England (for both kingdoms were alike exposed to this dreadful calamity) invaded the last in so numerous a body, as seemed to threaten it with universal subjection. But the English, more military than the Britons, whom, a few centuries before, they had treated with like violence, rouzed themselves with a vigour proportioned to the exigency. Ceorle, governor of Devonshire, fought a battle with one body of the Danes at Wiganburgh [r], and put them to rout with great slaughter. King Athelstan attacked another at sea near Sandwich, sunk nine of their ships, and put the rest to flight [s]. A body of them, however, ventured, for the first time, to take up winter-quarters in England; and receiving in the spring a strong reinforcement of their countrymen in 350

851.

[q] Alured Beverl. p. 108.

[r] H. Hunt lib. 5. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 3. Simeon Dunelm. p. 120.

[s] Chron. Sax. p. 74. Asserius, p. 2.

vessels,

veſſels, they advanced from the Iſle of Thanet, where they had ſtationed themſelves; burnt the cities of London and Canterbury; and having put to flight Brichtric, who now governed Mercia, under the title of King, they marched into the heart of Surrey, and laid every place waſte around them. Ethelwolf, impelled by the urgency of the danger, marched againſt them, at the head of the Weſt-Saxons; and carrying with him his ſecond ſon, Ethelbald, gave them battle at Okely, and gained a bloody victory over them. This advantage procured but a ſhort reſpite to the Engliſh. The Danes ſtill maintained their ſettlement in the Iſle of Thanet; and being attacked by Ealher and Huda, governors of Kent and Surrey, though defeated in the beginning of the action, they finally repulſed the aſſailants, and killed both the governors. They removed thence to the Iſle of Shepey; where they took up their winter-quarters, that they might farther extend their devaſtation and ravages. CHAP. II. 853.

THIS unſettled ſtate of England hindered not Ethelwolf from making a pilgrimage to Rome; whither he carried his fourth, and favourite ſon, Alfred, then only ſix years of age [t]. He paſſed there a twelvemonth in exerciſes of devotion; and failed not in that moſt eſſential part of devotion, liberality to the church of Rome. Beſides giving preſents to the moſt diſtinguiſhed eccleſiaſtics; he made a perpetual grant of three hundred mancuſes [u] a year to that ſee; one third to ſupport the lamps of St. Peter's, another thoſe of St. Paul's, a third to the pope himſelf [w]. In his return home, he married Judith, daughter of the emperor, Charles the Bald; but on his landing in England, he met with an oppoſition, which he little looked for.

[t] Aſſerius, p. 2. Chron. Sax. 76. Hunt. lib. 5. [u] A mancus was about the weight of our preſent half crown: See Spelman's Gloſſary, in verbo Mancus. [w] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 2.

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His eldeſt ſon, Athelſtan, being dead; Ethelbald, his ſecond, who had aſſumed the government, formed, in conjunction with many of the nobles, the project of excluding his father from a throne, which his weakneſs and ſuperſtition ſeem to have rendered him ſo ill-qualified to fill. The people were divided between the two princes; and a bloody civil war, joined to all the other calamities under which the Engliſh laboured, appeared inevitable; when Ethelwolf had the facility to yield to the greateſt part of his ſon's pretenſions. He made with him a partition of the kingdom; and taking to himſelf the eaſtern part, which was always at that time eſteemed the leaſt conſiderable, as well as the moſt expoſed [x], he delivered over to Ethelbald the ſovereignty of the weſtern. Immediately after, he ſummoned the ſtates of the whole kingdom, and with the ſame facility conferred a perpetual and important donation on the church.

The eccleſiaſtics, in thoſe days of ignorance, made rapid advances in the acquiſition of power and grandeur; and inculcating the moſt abſurd and moſt intereſted doctrines, though they ſometimes met, from the contrary intereſts of the laity, with an oppoſition, which it required time and addreſs to overcome, they found no obſtacle in their reaſon or underſtanding. Not content with the donations of land made them by the Saxon princes and nobles, and with temporary oblations from the devotion of the people, they had caſt a wiſhful eye on a vaſt revenue, which they claimed as belonging to them, by a divine, indefeizable, and inherent title. However little verſed in the ſcriptures, they had been able to diſcover, that, under the Jewiſh law, a tenth of all the produce of land was conferred on the prieſts; and forgetting, what they themſelves taught, that the moral part only of that law was obligatory on Chriſtians, they inſiſted, that

[x] Aſſerius, p. 3. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 2. Matth. Weſt. p. 158.

this

this donation conveyed a perpetual property, inherent by divine right in thoſe who officiated at the altar. During ſome centuries, the whole ſcope of ſermons and homilies was directed to this purpoſe; and one would have imagined, from the general tenor of theſe diſcourſes, that all the practical parts of Chriſtianity were comprehended in the exact and faithful payment of tythes to the clergy [y]. Encouraged by their ſucceſs in inculcating theſe doctrines; they ventured farther than they were warranted even by the Levitical law, and pretended to draw the tenth of all induſtry, merchandize, wages of labourers, and pay of ſoldiers [z]; nay, ſome canoniſts went ſo far as to affirm, that the clergy were entitled to the tythe of the profits, made by courtezans in the exerciſe of their profeſſion [a]. Though pariſhes had been inſtituted in England by Honorius, archbiſhop of Canterbury, near two centuries before [b], the eccleſiaſtics had never yet been able to get poſſeſſion of the tythes: They therefore ſeized the preſent favourable opportunity of making that acquiſition; when a weak, ſuperſtitious prince filled the throne, and when the people, diſcouraged by their loſſes from the Danes, and terrified with the fear of future invaſions, were ſuſceptible of any impreſſion, which bore the appearance of religion [c]. So meritorious was this conceſſion deemed by the Engliſh, that, truſting entirely to ſupernatural aſſiſtance, they neglected the ordinary means of ſafety; and agreed, even in the preſent deſperate extremity, that the revenues of the church ſhould be exempted from all burthens, though impoſed for national defence and ſecurity [d].

y Padre Paolo, ſopra beneficii eccleſiaſtici, p. 51, 52. edit. Colon. 1675.
z Spell. Conc. vol. 1. p. 268. a Padre Paolo, p. 132.
b Parker, p. 77. c Ingulf. p. 862. Selden's Hiſt. of tythes, c. 8.
d Aſſerius, p. 2. Chron. Sax. p. 76. W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 2. Ethelward, lib. 3. cap. 3. M. Weſt. p. 158. Ingulf. p. 17. Ann. Beverl. p. 95.

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ETHELBALD and ETHELBERT.

857. ETHELWOLF lived only two years after making this grant; and by his will he ſhared England between his two eldeſt ſons, Ethelbald and Ethelbert; the weſt being aſſigned to the former; the eaſt to the latter. Ethelbald was a profligate prince; and marrying Judith, his mother-in-law, gave great offence to the people; but moved by the remonſtrances of Swithun, biſhop of Wincheſter, he was at laſt prevailed on to divorce her. His reign was ſhort; and Ethelbert, his brother, ſucceeding to the government,
860. behaved himſelf, during a reign of five years, in a manner more worthy of his birth and ſtation. The kingdom, however, was ſtill infeſted by the Danes, who made an inroad and ſacked Wincheſter; but were there defeated. A body alſo of theſe pirates, who were quartered in the iſle of Thanet, having deceived the Engliſh by a treaty, unexpectedly broke into Kent, and committed great outrages.

ETHERED.

866. ETHELBERT was ſucceeded by his brother Ethered, who, though he defended himſelf with bravery, enjoyed, during his whole reign, no tranquillity from thoſe Daniſh irruptions. His younger brother, Alfred, ſeconded him in all his enterprizes; and generouſly ſacrificed to the public good all reſentment, which he might entertain, on account of his being excluded by Ethered from a large patrimony, which had been left him by his father.

THE firſt landing of the Danes in the reign of Ethered was among the Eaſt-Angles, who, more anxious for their preſent ſafety than for the common intereſt, entered into a ſeparate

a separate treaty with the enemy; and furnished them with horses, which enabled them to make an irruption by land into the kingdom of Northumberland. They there seized the city of York; and defended it against Osbricht and Ælla, two Northumbrian princes, who perished in the assault[f]. Encouraged by these successes, and by the superiority, which they had acquired in arms, they now ventured, under the command of Hinguar and Hubba, their chieftains, to leave the sea-coast, and penetrating into Mercia, they took up their winter-quarters at Nottingham, where they threatened the kingdom with a final subjection. The Mercians, in this extremity, applied to Ethered for succour; and that prince, with his brother, Alfred, conducting a great army to Nottingham, obliged the enemy to dislodge from their post, and to retreat into Northumberland. Their restless disposition, and their avidity for plunder, allowed them not to remain long in those quarters: They broke into East-Anglia, defeated and took prisoner, Edmund, the king of that country, whom they afterwards murdered in cool blood; and committing the most barbarous ravages on the people, particularly on the monasteries, they gave the East-Angles great cause to regret the temporary relief, which they had obtained, by assisting the common enemy. CHAP. II. 870.

THE next station of the Danes was at Reading; whence they infested the neighbouring country by their incursions. The Mercians, desirous of shaking off their dependance on Ethered, refused to join him with their forces; and that prince, attended by Alfred, was obliged to march against the enemy, with the West-Saxons alone, his hereditary subjects. The Danes being defeated in an action, shut themselves up in their garrison; but quickly making thence an irruption, they routed the West-Saxons, and obliged them to raise the siege. An action soon after 871

[f] Asser. p. 6. Chron. Sax. p. 79.

ensued

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ensued at Aston, in Berkshire, where the English, in the beginning of the day, were in danger of a total defeat. Alfred, advancing with one division of the army, was surrounded by the enemy in disadvantageous ground; and Ethered, who was at that time hearing mass, refused to march to his assistance, till prayers should be finished [g]: But as he afterwards obtained the victory, this success, not the danger of Alfred, was ascribed by the monks to the piety of that monarch. This battle of Aston did not terminate the war: Another battle was a little after fought at Basing; where the Danes were more successful; and being reinforced by a new army from their own country, they became every day more terrible to the English. Amidst these confusions, Ethered died of a wound, which he had received in an action with the Danes; and left the inheritance of his cares and misfortunes, rather than of his grandeur, to his brother, Alfred, who was now twenty-two years of age.

ALFRED.

871. THIS prince gave very early marks of those great virtues and shining talents, by which, during the most difficult times, he saved his country from utter ruin and subversion. Ethelwolf, his father, the year after his return with Alfred from Rome, had again sent the young prince thither with a numerous retinue; and a report being spread of the king's death, the pope, Leo III. gave Alfred the royal unction [h]; whether prognosticating his future greatness from the appearances of his pregnant genius, or willing to pretend, even in that age, to the right of conferring kingdoms. Alfred, on his return home, became every day more the object of his father's

[g] Asser. p. 7. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 3. Simeon Dunelm. p. 125. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 205. [h] Asser. p. 2. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 2. Ingulf, p. 869. Simeon Dunelm. p. 120, 139.

affections; but being indulged in all youthful pleaſures, he was much neglected in his education; and he had already reached his twelfth year, when he was yet totally ignorant of the loweſt elements of literature. His genius was firſt rouzed by the recital of Saxon poems, in which the queen took delight; and this ſpecies of erudition, which is ſometimes able to make a conſiderable progreſs even among barbarians, expanded thoſe noble and elevated ſentiments, which he had received from nature [i]. Encouraged by the queen, and ſtimulated by his own ardent inclination, he ſoon learned to read thoſe compoſitions; and proceeded thence to acquire the knowledge of the Latin tongue, in which he met with authors, that better prompted his heroic ſpirit, and directed his generous views. Abſorbed in theſe elegant purſuits, he regarded his acceſſion to royalty rather as an object of regret than of triumph [k]; but being called to the throne, in preference to his brother's children, as well by the will of his father, a circumſtance which had great authority with the Anglo-Saxons [l], as by the vows of the whole nation and the urgency of public affairs, he ſhook off his literary indolence, and exerted himſelf in the defence of his people. He had ſcarcely buried his brother, when he was obliged to take the field, in order to oppoſe the Danes, who had ſeized Wilton, and were exerciſing their uſual ravages on the countries around. He marched againſt them with the few troops, which he could aſſemble on a ſudden; and giving them battle, gained at firſt an advantage, but by his purſuing the victory too far, the ſuperiority of the enemy's numbers prevailed, and recovered them the day. Their loſs, however, in the action was ſo conſiderable, that, fearing Alfred would receive daily reinforcement from his ſubjects, they were content to ſtipulate for a ſafe retreat, and promiſed to de-

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[i] Aſſer. p. 5. M. Weſt. p. 167. [k] Aſſer. p. 7. [l] Ibid. p. 22. Simeon Dunelm. p. 121.

part

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part the kingdom. For that purpose they were conducted to London, and allowed to take up winter-quarters there; but, careless of their engagements, they immediately set themselves to the committing of spoil on the neighbouring country. Burrhed, king of Mercia, in whose territories London was situated, made a new stipulation with them, and engaged them, by presents of money, to remove to Lindesey in Lincolnshire; a country which they had already reduced to ruin and desolation. Finding therefore no object in that place, either for their rapine or violence, they suddenly turned back upon Mercia, in a quarter where they expected to find it without defence; and fixing their station at Repton in Derbyshire, they laid the whole country desolate with fire and sword. Burrhed, despairing of success against an enemy, whom no force could resist, and no treaties bind, abandoned his kingdom, and flying to Rome, took shelter in a cloyster [m]. He was brother-in-law to Alfred, and the last who bore the title of king in Mercia.

The West-Saxons were now the only remaining power in England; and though supported by the vigour and abilities of Alfred, they were unable to sustain the efforts of those ravagers, who from all quarters invaded them.

875. A new swarm of Danes came over this year under three princes, Guthrum, Oscitel, and Amund; and having first joined their countrymen at Repton, they soon found the necessity of separating, in order to provide for their subsistence. Part of them, under the command of Haldene, their chieftain [n], marched into Northumberland, where they fixed their residence; part of them took quarters at Cambridge, whence they dislodged in the ensuing summer, and seized Wereham, in the county of Dorset, the very center of Alfred's dominions. That prince so straitened them in these quarters, that they were

[m] Asser. p. 8. Chron. Sax. p. 82. Ethelward, lib. 4. cap. 4.
[n] Chron. Sax. p. 83.

2 content

content to come to a treaty with him, and ſtipulated to depart his country. Alfred, well acquainted with their uſual perfidy, obliged them to ſwear upon the holy reliques to the obſervance of the treaty [o]; not that he expected they would pay any veneration to the reliques; but he hoped, that, if they now violated this oath, their impiety would infallibly draw down upon them the vengeance of heaven. But the Danes, little apprehenſive of this danger, ſuddenly, without ſeeking for any pretence, fell upon Alfred's army; and having put it to rout, marched weſtward, and took poſſeſſion of Exeter. The prince collected new forces; and exerted ſuch vigour, that he fought in one year eight battles againſt the enemy [p], and reduced them to the utmoſt extremity. He hearkened however to new propoſals of peace; and was ſatisfied to ſtipulate with them, that they would ſettle ſomewhere in England [q], and would not permit the entrance of more ravagers into the kingdom. But while he was expecting the execution of this treaty, which it ſeemed the intereſt of the Danes themſelves to fulfil, he heard that another body had landed, and having collected all the ſcattered troops of their countrymen, had ſurprized Chippenham, then a conſiderable town, and were exerciſing their uſual ravages all around them.

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This laſt incident quite broke the ſpirit of the Saxons, and reduced them to deſpair. Finding that, after all the miſerable havoc, which they had undergone in their perſons and in their property; after all the vigorous actions, which they had exerted in their own defence; a new band, equally greedy of ſpoil and ſlaughter, had diſembarked among them; they believed themſelves abandoned by heaven to deſtruction, and delivered over to thoſe ſwarms of robbers, which the fertile north thus inceſſantly poured forth againſt them. Some left their country, and

[o] Aſſer. p. 8. [p] Aſſer. p. 8. The Saxon Chronicle, p. 82. ſays nine battles. [q] Aſſer. p. 9. Alur. Beverl. p. 104.

retired

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retired into Wales or fled beyond sea: Others submitted to the conquerors, in hopes of appeasing their fury by a servile obedience[r]: And every man's attention being now engrossed in concern for his own preservation, no one would hearken to the exhortations of the King, who summoned them to make, under his conduct, one effort more in defence of their prince, their country, and their liberties. Alfred himself was obliged to relinquish the ensigns of his dignity, to dismiss his servants, and to seek shelter, in the meanest disguises, from the pursuit and fury of his enemies. He concealed himself under a peasant's habit, and lived some time in the house of a neat-herd, who had been entrusted with the care of some of his cows[s]. There passed here an incident, which has been recorded by all the historians, and was long preserved by popular tradition; though it contains nothing memorable in itself, except so far as every circumstance is interesting, which attends so great virtue and dignity, reduced to such distress. The wife of the neat-herd was ignorant of the condition of her royal guest; and observing him one day busy by the fire-side in trimming his bow and arrows, she desired him to take care of some cakes, which were toasting, while she was employed elsewhere in other domestic affairs. But Alfred, whose thoughts were otherwise engaged, neglected this injunction; and the good woman, on her return, finding her cakes all burnt, rated the king very severely, and upbraided him, that he always seemed very well pleased to eat her warm cakes, though he was thus negligent in toasting them[t].

By degrees, Alfred, as he found the search of the enemy become more remiss, collected some of his retainers, and retired into the center of a bog, formed by the stagnating waters of the Thone and Parret, in Somersetshire.

[r] Chron. Sax. p. 84. Alured Beverl. p. 105. [s] Asser. p. 9.
[t] Asser. p. 9. M. West. p. 170.

He

He here found two acres of firm ground; and building a habitation on them, rendered himself secure by its fortifications, and still more by the unknown and inaccessible roads which led to it, and by the forests and morasses, with which it was every way environed. This place he called Æthelingey, or the Isle of Nobles[u]; and it now bears the name of Athelney. He thence made frequent and unexpected sallies upon the Danes, who often felt the vigour of his arm, but knew not from what quarter the blow came. He subsisted himself and his followers by the plunder which he acquired; he procured them consolation by revenge; and from small successes, he opened their minds to hope, that, notwithstanding his present low condition, more important victories might at length attend his valour. CHAP. II.

ALFRED lay here concealed, but not unactive, during a twelvemonth; when the news of a prosperous event reached his ears, and called him to the field. Hubba, the Dane, having spread devastation, fire, and slaughter, over Wales, had landed in Devonshire from twenty-three vessels, and laid siege to the castle of Kinwith, a place situated near the mouth of the small river Tau. Oddune, earl of Devonshire, with his followers, had taken shelter there; and being ill supplied with provisions, and even with water, he determined, by some vigorous blow, to prevent the necessity of submitting to the barbarous enemy. He made a sudden sally on the Danes before sun-rising; and taking them unprepared, he put them to rout, pursued them with great slaughter, killed Hubba himself, and got possession of the famous *Reafen*, or enchanted standard, in which the Danes put great confidence[w]. It contained the figure of a raven, which had

[u] Chron. Sax. p. 85. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Ethelward, lib. 4. cap. 4. Ingulf, p. 26. [w] Asser. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 84. Abbas Rieval. p. 395. Alured Beverl, p. 105.

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been inwove by the three ſiſters of Hinguar and Hubba, with many magical incantations, and which, by its different movements, prognoſticated, as the Danes believed, the good or bad ſucceſs of any enterprize [x].

When Alfred obſerved this ſymptom of ſucceſsful reſiſtance in his ſubjects, he left his retreat; but before he would aſſemble them in arms, or urge them to any attempt, which, if unfortunate, might, in their preſent deſpondency, prove fatal, he reſolved to inſpect, himſelf, the ſituation of the enemy, and to judge of the probability of ſucceſs. For this purpoſe he entered their camp under the diſguiſe of a harper, and paſſed unſuſpected through every quarter. He ſo entertained them with his muſic and facetious humours, that he met with a welcome reception; and was even introduced to the tent of Guthrum, their prince, where he remained ſome days [y]. He remarked the ſupine ſecurity of the Danes, their contempt of the Engliſh, their negligence in foraging and plundering, and their diſſolute waſting of what they gained by rapine and violence. Encouraged by theſe favourable appearances, he ſecretly ſent emiſſaries to the moſt conſiderable of his ſubjects, and ſummoned them to a rendezvous, attended by their warlike followers, at Brixton, on the borders of Selwood foreſt [z]. The Engliſh, who had hoped to put an end to their calamities by ſervile ſubmiſſion, now found the inſolence and rapine of the conqueror more intolerable than all paſt fatigues and dangers; and, at the appointed day, they joyfully reſorted to their prince. On his appearance, they received him with ſhouts of applauſe [a]; and could not ſatiate their eyes with the ſight of this beloved monarch, whom they had long regarded as dead, and who now,

[x] Aſſer. p. 10. [y] W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. [z] Chron. Sax. p. 85. [a] Aſſer. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 85. Simeon Dunelm. p. 128. Alured Beverl. p. 105. Abbas Rieval. p. 354.

with

with voice and looks expreſſing his confidence of ſucceſs, called them to liberty and to vengeance. He inſtantly conducted them to Eddington, where the Danes were encamped; and taking advantage of his previous knowledge of the place, he directed his attack againſt the moſt unguarded quarter of the enemy. The Danes, ſurpriſed to ſee an army of Engliſh, whom they conſidered as totally ſubdued, and ſtill more aſtoniſhed to hear that Alfred was at their head, made but a faint reſiſtance, notwithſtanding their ſuperiority of number; and were ſoon put to flight with great ſlaughter. The remainder of the routed army, with their prince, was beſieged by Alfred in a fortified camp, to which they fled; but being reduced to extremity by want and hunger, they had recourſe to the clemency of the victor, and offered to ſubmit on any conditions. The king, no leſs generous than brave, gave them their lives; and even formed a ſcheme for converting them, from mortal enemies, into faithful ſubjects and confederates. He knew, that the kingdoms of Eaſt-Anglia and Northumberland were totally deſolated by the frequent inroads of the Danes; and he now purpoſed to re-people them by ſettling there Guthrum and his followers. He hoped that the new planters would at laſt betake themſelves to induſtry, when, by reaſon of his reſiſtance, and the exhauſted condition of the country, they could no longer ſubſiſt by plunder; and that they might ſerve him as a rampart againſt any future incurſions of their countrymen. But before he ratified theſe mild conditions with the Danes, he required, that they ſhould give him one pledge of their ſubmiſſion, and of their inclination to incorporate with the Engliſh, by declaring their converſion to Chriſtianity [b]. Guthrum and his army had no averſion to this propoſal; and, without

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[b] Chron. Sax. p 83.

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much inſtruction or argument or conference, they were all admitted to baptiſm. The king anſwered for Guthrum at the font, gave him the name of Athelſtan, and received him as his adopted ſon [c].

880. THE ſucceſs of this expedient ſeemed to correſpond to Alfred's hopes: The greater part of the Danes ſettled peaceably in their new quarters: Some ſmaller bodies of the ſame nation, which were diſperſed in Mercia, were diſtributed into the five cities of Darby, Leiceſter, Stamford, Lincoln, and Nottingham, and were thence called the Fif or Five-Burgers. The more turbulent and unquiet made an expedition into France under the command of Haſtings [d]; and except by a ſhort incurſion of Danes, who ſailed up the Thames and landed at Fulham, but ſuddenly retreated to their ſhips, on finding the country in a poſture of defence, Alfred was not for ſome years infeſted by the inroads of thoſe barbarians [e].

The king employed this interval of tranquillity in reſtoring order to the ſtate, which had been ſhaken by ſo many violent convulſions; in eſtabliſhing civil and military inſtitutions; in compoſing the minds of men to induſtry and juſtice; and in providing againſt the return of like calamities. He was, more properly than his grandfather Egbert, the ſole monarch of the Engliſh, (for ſo the Saxons were now univerſally called) becauſe the kingdom of Mercia was at laſt incorporated in his ſtate, and was governed by Ethelbert, his brother-in-law, who bore the title of Earl: And though the Danes, who peopled Eaſt-Anglia and Northumberland, were for ſome time ruled immediately by their own princes, they all acknowledged a ſubordination to Alfred, and ſubmitted to his ſuperior authority. As equality among ſubjects is the great ſource of concord, Alfred gave the ſame laws to the

[c] Aſſer. p. 10. Chron. Sax. p. 60. Ingulf, p. 26. [d] W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. [e] Aſſer. p. 11.

Danes

Danes and Engliſh, and put them entirely on a like footing in the adminiſtration both of civil and criminal juſtice. The fine for the murder of a Dane was the ſame with that for the murder of an Engliſhman; the great ſymbol of equality in thoſe ages.

THE king, after rebuilding the ruined cities, particularly London [f], which had been deſtroyed by the Danes in the reign of Ethelwolf, eſtabliſhed a regular militia for the defence of the kingdom. He ordained that all his people ſhould be armed and regiſtered; he aſſigned them a regular rotation of duty; he diſtributed part into the caſtles and fortreſſes, which he built at proper places [g]; he required another part to take the field on any alarm, and to aſſemble at ſtated places of rendezvous; and he left a ſufficient number at home, who were employed in the cultivation of the land, and who afterwards took their turn in military ſervice [h]. The whole kingdom was like one great garriſon; and the Danes could no ſooner appear in one place, than a ſufficient number was aſſembled to oppoſe them, without leaving the other quarters defenceleſs or diſarmed [i].

BUT Alfred, ſenſible that the proper method of oppoſing an enemy, who made incurſions by ſea, was to meet them on their own element, took care to provide himſelf with a naval force [k], which, though the moſt natural defence of an iſland, had hitherto been totally neglected by the Engliſh. He encreaſed the ſhipping of his kingdom both in number and ſtrength, and trained his ſubjects in the practice as well of ſailing, as of naval action. He diſtributed his armed veſſels in proper ſtations around the iſland, and was ſure to meet the Daniſh ſhips either before or after they had landed their troops, and to purſue

[f] Aſſer. p. 15. Chron. Sax. p. 88. M. Weſt. p. 171. Simeon Dunelm. p. 131. Brompton, p. 812. Alured Beverl. ex edit. Hearne, p. 106.

[g] Aſſer. p. 18. Ingulf, p. 27. [h] Chron. Sax. p. 92, 93. [i] Spelman's life of Alfred, p. 147. edit. 1709. [k] Aſſer. p. 9. M. Weſt. p. 179.

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them in all their incurſions. Though the Danes might ſuddenly, by ſurprize, diſembark on the coaſt, which was generally become deſolate by their frequent ravages, they were encountered by the Engliſh fleet in their retreat; and eſcaped not, as formerly, by abandoning their booty, but paid, by their total deſtruction, the penalty of the diſorders which they had committed.

In this manner, Alfred repelled ſeveral inroads of theſe pyratical Danes, and maintained his kingdom, during ſome years, in ſafety and tranquillity. A fleet of a hundred and twenty ſhips of war was ſtationed upon the coaſt; and being provided with warlike engines, as well as with expert ſeamen, both Friſians and Engliſh, (for Alfred ſupplied the defects of his own ſubjects by engaging able foreigners in his ſervice) maintained a ſuperiority over thoſe ſmaller bands, with which England
893. had ſo often been infeſted [l]. But at laſt Haſtings the famous Daniſh chief, having ravaged all the provinces of France, both along the ſea-coaſt and the Loire and Seine, and being obliged to quit that country, more by the deſolation which he himſelf had occaſioned, than by the reſiſtance of the inhabitants, appeared off the coaſt of Kent with a fleet of 330 ſail. The greater part of the enemy diſembarked in the Rother, and ſeized the fort of Apuldore. Haſtings himſelf, commanding a fleet of eighty ſail, entered the Thames, and fortifying Milton in Kent, began to ſpread his forces over the country, and to commit the moſt deſtructive ravages. But Alfred, on the firſt alarm of this deſcent, flew to the defence of his people, at the head of a ſelect band of ſoldiers, whom he always kept about his perſon [m]; and gathering to him the armed militia from all quarters, appeared in the field with a force ſuperior to the enemy. All ſtraggling parties,

[l] Aſſer. p. 11. Chron. Sax. p. 86, 87. M. Weſt. p. 176.
[m] Aſſer. p. 15.

whom

whom neceſſity or love of plunder had drawn to a diſtance from their chief encampment, were cut off by the Engliſh [n]; and theſe pyrates, inſtead of encreaſing their ſpoil, found themſelves cooped up in their fortifications, and obliged to ſubſiſt by the plunder which they had brought from France. Tired of this ſituation, which muſt in the end prove ruinous to them, the Danes at Apuldore roſe ſuddenly from their encampment, with an intention of marching towards the Thames, and paſſing over into Eſſex: But they eſcaped not the vigilance of Alfred, who encountered them at Farnham, put them to rout [o], ſeized all their horſes and baggage, and chaced the runaways on board their ſhips, which carried them up the Colne to Merſey in Eſſex, where they entrenched themſelves. Haſtings, at the ſame time, and probably by concert, made a like movement; and deſerting Milton, took poſſeſſion of Bamflete, near the iſle of Canvey in the ſame county [p]; where he haſtily threw up fortifications for his defence againſt the power of Alfred.

UNFORTUNATELY for the Engliſh, Guthrum, prince of the Eaſt-Anglian Danes, was now dead; as was alſo Guthred, whom the king had appointed governor of the Northumbrians; and thoſe reſtleſs tribes, being no longer reſtrained by the authority of their princes, and being encouraged by the appearance of ſo great a body of their countrymen, broke into rebellion, ſhook off the authority of Alfred, and yielding to their inveterate habits of war and depredation [q], embarked on board two hundred and forty veſſels, and appeared before Exeter in the weſt of England. Alfred loſt not a moment in oppoſing this new enemy. Having left ſome forces at London to make head againſt Haſtings and the other Danes, he marched ſuddenly to the weſt [r]; and falling on the rebels before

[n] Chron. Sax. p. 92. [o] Chron. Sax. p. 93. Flor. Wigorn. p. 595. [p] Chron. Sax. p. 93. [q] Chron. Sax. p. 92. [r] Chron. Sax. p. 93.

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they were aware, purſued them to their ſhips with great ſlaughter. Theſe ravagers, ſailing next to Suſſex, began to plunder the country near Chicheſter; but the order, which Alfred had every where eſtabliſhed, ſufficed here, without his preſence, for the defence of the place; and the rebels, meeting with a new repulſe, in which many of them were killed, and ſome of their ſhips taken [s], were obliged to put again to ſea, and were diſcouraged from attempting any other enterprize.

MEANWHILE, the Daniſh invaders in Eſſex, having united their force under the command of Haſtings, advanced into the inland country, and made ſpoil of all around them; but ſoon had reaſon to repent of their temerity. The Engliſh army, left in London, aſſiſted by a body of the citizens, attacked the enemy's entrenchments at Bamfiete, overpowered the garriſon, and having done great execution upon them, carried off the wife and two ſons of Haſtings [t]. Alfred generouſly ſpared theſe captives; and even reſtored them to Haſtings [u], on condition that he ſhould depart the kingdom.

BUT though the king had thus honourably rid himſelf of this dangerous enemy, he had not entirely ſubdued or expelled the invaders. The pyratical Danes willingly followed in an excurſion any proſperous leader, who gave them hopes of booty; but were not ſo eaſily induced to relinquiſh their enterprize, or ſubmit to return, baffled and without plunder, into their native country. Great numbers of them, after the departure of Haſtings, ſeized and fortified Shobury at the mouth of the Thames; and having left a garriſon there, they marched along the river, till they came to Boddington in the county of Gloceſter; where, being reinforced by ſome Welſh, they threw up entrenchments, and prepared for their defence. The

[s] Chron. Sax. p. 96. Flor. Wigorn. p. 596. [t] Chron. Sax. p. 94. M. Weſt. p. 178. [u] M. Weſt. p. 179.

king

king here ſurrounded them with the whole force of his dominions [w]; and as he had now a certain proſpect of victory, he reſolved to truſt nothing to chance, but rather to maſter his enemies by famine than aſſault. They were reduced to ſuch extremities, that, having eat their own horſes, and having many of them periſhed with hunger [x], they made a deſperate ſally upon the Engliſh; and though the greater number fell in the action, a conſiderable body made their eſcape [y]. Theſe roved about for ſome time in England, ſtill purſued by the vigilance of Alfred; they attacked Leiceſter with ſucceſs, defended themſelves in Hartford, and then fled to Quatford, where they were finally broken and ſubdued. The ſmall remains of them either diſperſed themſelves among their countrymen in Northumberland and Eaſt-Anglia [z], or had recourſe again to the ſea, where they exerciſed pyracy, under the command of Sigefert, a Northumbrian. This free-booter, well acquainted with Alfred's naval preparations, had framed veſſels of a new conſtruction, higher, and longer, and ſwifter, than thoſe of the Engliſh: But the king ſoon diſcovered his ſuperior ſkill, by building veſſels ſtill higher, and longer, and ſwifter, than thoſe of the Northumbrians; and falling upon them, while they were exerciſing their ravages in the weſt, he took twenty of their ſhips; and having tried all the priſoners at Wincheſter, he hanged them as pyrates, the common enemies of mankind. CHAP. II.

THE well-timed ſeverity of this execution, together with the excellent poſture of defence eſtabliſhed every where, reſtored full tranquillity in England, and provided for the future ſecurity of the government. The Eaſt-Anglian and Northumbrian Danes, on the firſt appearance of Alfred upon their frontiers, made anew the moſt humble ſubmiſſions to him; and he thought it prudent to take

[w] Chron. Sax. p. 94. [x] Ibid. M. Weſt. p. 179. Flor. Wigorn. p. 596. [y] Chron. Sax. p. 95. [z] Ibid. p. 97.

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them under his immediate government, without eſtabliſhing over them a viceroy of their own nation[a]. The Welſh alſo acknowledged his authority; and this great prince had now, by prudence and juſtice and valour, eſtabliſhed his ſovereignty over all the ſouthern parts of the iſland, from the Engliſh channel to the frontiers of Scotland; when he died, in the vigour of his age and the full ſtrength of his faculties, after a glorious reign of twenty-nine years and a half[b]; in which he deſervedly attained the appellation of Alfred the Great, and the title of Founder of the Engliſh monarchy.

901.

THE merit of this prince, both in private and public life, may with advantage be ſet in oppoſition to that of any monarch or citizen, which the annals of any age or any nation can preſent to us. He ſeems indeed to be the model of that perfect character, which, under the denomination of a ſage or wiſe man, philoſophers have been fond of delineating, rather as a fiction of their imagination, than in hopes of ever ſeeing it really exiſting: So happily were all his virtues tempered together; ſo juſtly were they blended; and ſo powerfully did each prevent the other from exceeding its proper boundaries! He knew how to reconcile the moſt enterprizing ſpirit with the cooleſt moderation; the moſt obſtinate perſeverance with the eaſieſt flexibility; the moſt ſevere juſtice with the gentleſt lenity; the greateſt vigour in commanding with the moſt perfect affability of deportment[c]; the higheſt capacity and inclination for ſcience, with the moſt ſhining talents for action. His civil and his military virtues are almoſt equally the objects of our admiration; excepting only, that the former, being more rare among princes, as well as more uſeful, ſeem chiefly to challenge our applauſe. Nature alſo, as if deſirous that ſo bright

[a] Flor. Wigorn. p. 598. [b] Aſſer. p. 21. Chron. Sax. p. 99.
[c] Aſſer. p. 13.

a production

a production of her ſkill ſhould be ſet in the faireſt light, had beſtowed on him every bodily accompliſhment, vigour of limbs, dignity of ſhape and air, with a pleaſing, engaging, and open countenance[e]. Fortune alone, by throwing him into that barbarous age, deprived him of hiſtorians worthy to tranſmit his fame to poſterity; and we wiſh to ſee him delineated in more lively colours, and with more particular ſtrokes, that we may at leaſt perceive ſome of thoſe ſmall ſpecks and blemiſhes, from which, as a man, it is impoſſible he could be entirely exempted. CHAP. II.

But we ſhould give but an imperfect idea of Alfred's merit, were we to confine our narration to his military exploits, and were not more particular in our account of his inſtitutions for the execution of juſtice, and of his zeal for the encouragement of arts and ſciences.

After Alfred had ſubdued and had ſettled or expelled the Danes, he found the kingdom in the moſt wretched condition; deſolated by the ravages of thoſe barbarians, and thrown into diſorders, which were calculated to perpetuate its miſery. Though the great armies of the Danes were broken, the country was full of ſtraggling troops of that nation, who, being accuſtomed to live by plunder, were become incapable of induſtry, and who, from the natural ferocity of their manners, indulged themſelves in committing violence, even beyond what was requiſite to ſupply their neceſſities. The Engliſh themſelves, reduced to the moſt extreme indigence by theſe continued depredations, had ſhaken off all bands of government; and thoſe who had been plundered to-day, betook themſelves next day to a like diſorderly life, and from deſpair joined the robbers in pillaging and ruining their fellow-citizens. Theſe were the evils, for which it was neceſ-

[e] Aſſer. p. 5.

ſary

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sary that the vigilance and activity of Alfred should provide a remedy.

That he might render the execution of justice strict and regular, he divided all England into counties; these counties he subdivided into hundreds; and the hundreds into tithings. Every house-holder was answerable for the behaviour of his family and slaves, and even of his guests, if they lived above three days in his house. Ten neighbouring house-holders were formed into one corporation, who, under the name of a tithing, decennary, or fribourg, were answerable for each other's conduct, and over whom one person, called a tythingman, headbourg, or borsholder, was appointed to preside. Every man was punished as an outlaw, who did not register himself in some tything. And no man could change his habitation, without a warrant or certificate from the borsholder of the tything, to which he formerly belonged.

When any person in any tything or decennary was guilty of a crime, the borsholder was summoned to answer for him; and if he was not willing to be surety for his appearance and his clearing himself, the criminal was committed to prison, and there detained till his trial. If he fled, either before or after finding sureties, the borsholder and decennary became liable to enquiry, and were exposed to the penalties of law. Thirty-one days were allowed them for producing the criminal; and if that time elapsed without their being able to find him, the borsholder, with two other members of the decennary, was obliged to appear, and together with three chief members of the three neighbouring decennaries (making twelve in all) to swear that his decennary was free from all privity both of the crime committed, and of the escape of the criminal. If the borsholder could not find such a number to answer for their innocence, the decennary was compelled by fine to make satisfaction to the king, according

ing to the degree of the offence [f]. By this inſtitution every man was obliged from his own intereſt to keep a watchful eye over the conduct of his neighbours; and was in a manner ſurety for the behaviour of thoſe who were placed under the diviſion, to which he belonged: Whence theſe decennaries received the name of frank-pledges.

SUCH a regular diſtribution of the people, with ſuch a ſtrict confinement in their habitation, may not be neceſſary in times, when men are more enured to obedience and juſtice; and it might perhaps be regarded as deſtructive of liberty and commerce in a poliſhed ſtate; but it was well calculated to reduce that fierce and licentious people under the ſalutary reſtraint of law and government. But Alfred took care to temper theſe rigours by other inſtitutions favourable to the freedom of the citizens; and nothing could be more popular and liberal than his plan for the adminiſtration of juſtice. The borſholder ſummoned together his whole decennary to aſſiſt him in deciding any leſſer difference, which occurred among the members of this ſmall community. In affairs of greater moment, in appeals from the decennary, or in controverſies ariſing between members of different decennaries, the cauſe was brought before the hundred, which conſiſted of ten decennaries, or a hundred families of freemen, and which was regularly aſſembled once in four weeks, for the deciding of cauſes [g]. Their method of deciſion deſerves to be noted, as being the origin of juries; an inſtitution, admirable in itſelf, and the beſt calculated for the preſervation of liberty and the adminiſtration of juſtice, that ever was deviſed by the wit of man. Twelve freeholders were choſen; who, having ſworn, together with the hundreder or preſiding magiſtrate of that diviſion, to

[f] Leges St. Edw. cap. 20. apud Wilkins, p. 202. [g] Leg. Edw. cap. 2.

adminiſter

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adminiſter impartial juſtice [h], proceeded to the examination of that cauſe, which was ſubmitted to their juriſdiction. And beſide theſe monthly meetings of the hundred, there was an annual meeting, appointed for a more general inſpection of the police of the diſtrict; for the enquiry into crimes, the correction of abuſes in magiſtrates, and the obliging of every perſon to ſhew the decennary in which he was regiſtered. The people, in imitation of their anceſtors, the ancient Germans, aſſembled there in arms; whence a hundred was ſometimes called a wapentake, and its court ſerved both for the ſupport of military diſcipline, and for the adminiſtration of civil juſtice [i].

THE next ſuperior court to that of the hundred was the county-court, which met twice a year, after Michaelmas and Eaſter, and conſiſted of the freeholders of the county, who poſſeſſed an equal vote in the deciſion of cauſes. The biſhop preſided in this court, together with the alderman; and the proper object of the court was the receiving of appeals from the hundreds and decennaries, and the deciding of ſuch controverſies as aroſe between men of different hundreds. Formerly, the alderman poſſeſſed both the civil and military authority; but Alfred, ſenſible that this conjunction of powers rendered the nobility dangerous and independant, appointed alſo a ſheriff in each county; who enjoyed a co-ordinate authority with the former in the judicial function [k]. His office alſo impowered him to guard the rights of the crown in the county, and to levy the fines impoſed; which in that age formed no contemptible part of the public revenue.

THERE lay an appeal, in default of juſtice, from all theſe courts to the king himſelf in council; and as the people, ſenſible of the equity and great talents of Alfred, placed their chief confidence in him, he was ſoon over-

[h] Fædus Alfred, and Gothurn, apud Wilkins, cap. 3. p. 47. Leg. Ethelſtani, cap. 2. apud Wilkins, p. 53. LL. Ethelr. § 4. Wilkins, p. 117. [i] Spelman in voce Wapentake. [k] Ingulf. p. 870

whelmed

whelmed with appeals from all parts of England. He was indefatigable in the diſpatch of theſe cauſes [l]; but finding that his time muſt be entirely engroſſed by this branch of duty, he reſolved to obviate the inconvenience, by correcting the ignorance or corruption of the inferior magiſtrates, from which it aroſe [m]. He took care to have his nobility inſtructed in letters and the laws [n]: He choſe the earls and ſheriffs from among the men moſt celebrated for probity and knowledge: He puniſhed ſeverely all malverſation in office [o]: And he removed all the earls, whom he found unequal to the truſt [p]; allowing only ſome of the moſt elderly to ſerve by a deputy, till their death ſhould make room for more worthy ſucceſſors. CHAP. II.

THE better to guide the magiſtrates in the adminiſtration of juſtice, Alfred framed a body of laws; which, though now loſt, ſerved long as the baſis of Engliſh juriſprudence, and is generally deemed the origin of what is denominated the COMMON LAW. He appointed regular meetings of the ſtates of England twice a year in London [q]; a city which he himſelf had repaired and beautified, and which he thus rendered the capital of the kingdom. The ſimilarity of theſe inſtitutions to the cuſtoms of the ancient Germans, to the practice of the other northern conquerors, and to the Saxon laws during the Heptarchy, prevents us from regarding Alfred as the ſole author of this plan of government; and leads us rather to think, that, like a wiſe man, he contented himſelf with reforming, extending, and executing the inſtitutions, which he found previouſly eſtabliſhed. But on the whole, ſuch ſucceſs attended his legiſlation, that every thing bore ſuddenly a new face in England: Robberies and iniquities of all kinds were repreſſed by the puniſhment or reformation

[l] Aſſer. p. 20. [m] Ibid. p. 13, 21. Flor. Wigorn. p. 594. Abbas Rieval. p. 355. [n] Flor. Wigorn. p. 594. Brompton, p. 814. [o] Le Miroir de Juſtice, chap. 2. [p] Aſſer. p. 20. [q] Le Miroir de Juſtice.

of

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of the criminals [r]: And so exact was the general police, that Alfred, it is said, hung up, by way of bravade, golden bracelets near the highways; and no man dared to touch them [s]. Yet amidst these rigours of justice, this great prince preserved the most sacred regard to the liberty of his people; and it is a memorable sentiment preserved in his will, that it was just the English should for ever remain as free as their own thoughts [t].

As good morals and knowledge are almost inseparable, in every age, though not in every individual; the care of Alfred for the encouragement of learning among his subjects was another useful branch of his legislation, and tended to reclaim the English from their former dissolute and ferocious manners: But the King was guided in this pursuit, less by political views, than by his natural bent and propensity towards letters. When he came to the throne, he found the nation sunk into the grossest ignorance and barbarism, proceeding from the continued disorders in the government, and from the ravages of the Danes: The monasteries were destroyed, the monks butchered or dispersed, their libraries burnt; and thus the only seats of erudition in those ages were totally subverted. Alfred himself complains, that on his accession he knew not one person, south of the Thames, who could so much as interpret the Latin service; and very few in the northern parts, who had reached even that pitch of erudition. But this prince invited over the most celebrated scholars from all parts of Europe; he established schools every where for the instruction of his people; he founded, or at least repaired the university of Oxford, and endowed it with many privileges, revenues and immunities; he enjoined by law all freeholders possessed of two hydes [u] of

[r] Ingulf, p. 27. [s] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 4. [t] Asser. p. 24. [u] A hyde contained land sufficient to employ one plough. See H. Hunt. lib. 6. in A. D. 1008. Annal. Waverl. in A. D. 1083. Gervase of Tilbury says it commonly contained about 100 acres.

land

land or more to send their children to school for their instruction; he gave preferment both in church and state to such only as had made some proficiency in knowledge: And by all these expedients he had the satisfaction, before his death, to see a great change in the face of affairs; and in a work of his, which is still extant, he congratulates himself on the progress which learning, under his patronage, had already made in England. CHAP. II.

But the most effectual expedient, employed by Alfred, for the encouragement of learning, was his own example, and the constant assiduity, with which, notwithstanding the multiplicity and urgency of his affairs, he employed himself in the pursuits of knowledge. He usually divided his time into three equal portions: One was employed in sleep, and the refection of his body by diet and exercise; another in the dispatch of business; a third in study and devotion: And that he might more exactly measure the hours, he made use of burning tapers of equal length, which he fixed in lanthorns [w]; an expedient suited to that rude age, when the geometry of dialling and the mechanism of clocks and watches were totally unknown. And by such a regular distribution of his time, though he often laboured under great bodily infirmities [x], this martial hero, who fought in person fifty-six battles by sea and land [y], was able, during a life of no extraordinary length, to acquire more knowledge, and even to compose more books, than most studious men, though blest with the greatest leisure and application, have, in more fortunate ages, made the object of their uninterrupted industry.

Sensible, that the people, at all times, especially when their understandings are obstructed by ignorance and bad education, are not much susceptible of speculative instruction, Alfred endeavoured to convey his morality by

[w] Asser. p. 20. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Ingulf, p. 870.
[x] Asser. p. 4, 12, 13, 17. [y] W. Malm. lib. 4. cap. 4.

CHAP. apologues, parables, ſtories, apophthegms, couched in poetry; and beſides propagating among his ſubjects, former compoſitions of that kind, which he found in the Saxon tongue [z], he exerciſed his genius in inventing works of a like nature [a], as well as in tranſlating from the Greek the elegant fables of Æſop. He alſo gave Saxon tranſlations of Oroſius's and Bede's hiſtories; and of Boethius concerning the conſolation of philoſophy [b]. And he deemed it nowiſe derogatory from his other great characters of ſovereign, legiſlator, warrior, and politician, thus to lead the way to his people in the purſuits of literature.

MEANWHILE, this prince was not negligent in encouraging the vulgar and mechanical arts, which have a more ſenſible, though not a cloſer connexion with the intereſts of ſociety. He invited, from all quarters, induſtrious foreigners to re-people his country, which had been deſolated by the ravages of the Danes [c]. He introduced and encouraged manufactures of all kinds; and no inventor or improver of any ingenious art did he ſuffer to go unrewarded [d]. He prompted men of activity to betake themſelves to navigation, to puſh commerce into the moſt remote countries, and to acquire riches by propagating induſtry among their fellow-citizens. He ſet apart a ſeventh portion of his own revenue for maintaining a number of workmen, whom he conſtantly employed in rebuilding the ruined cities, caſtles, palaces, and monaſteries [e]. Even the elegancies of life were brought to him from the Mediterranean and the Indies [f]; and his ſubjects, by ſeeing thoſe productions of the peaceful arts, were taught to reſpect the virtues of juſtice and induſtry, from which alone they could ariſe. Both living and dead, Alfred was regarded, by foreigners, no leſs than by his own

[z] Aſſer. p. 13. [a] Spelman, p. 124. Abbaſ. Rieval. p. 355.
[b] W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. Brompton, p. 814. [c] Aſſer. p. 13. Flor. Wigorn. p. 588. [d] Aſſer. p. 20. [e] Ibid. W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 4. [f] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 4.

subjects, as the greatest prince after Charlemagne that had appeared in Europe during several ages, and as one of the wisest and best that had ever adorned the annals of any nation. CHAP. II.

ALFRED had, by his wife, Ethelswitha, daughter of a Mercian earl, three sons and three daughters. The eldest son, Edmund, died without issue, in his father's lifetime. The third, Ethelward, inherited his father's passion for letters, and lived a private life. The second, Edward, succeeded to his power; and passes by the appellation of Edward the Elder, being the first of that name who sat on the English throne.

EDWARD the Elder.

THIS prince, who equalled his father in military talents, though inferior to him in knowledge and erudition [g], found immediately, on his accession, a specimen of that turbulent life, to which all princes, and even all individuals were exposed, in an age when men, less restrained by law or justice, and less occupied by industry, had no aliment for their inquietude, but wars, insurrections, convulsions, rapine, and depredation. Ethelwald, his cousin-german, son of king Ethelbert, the elder brother of Alfred, insisted on his preferable title [h]; and arming his partizans, took possession of Winburne, where he seemed determined to defend himself to the last extremity, and to await the issue of his pretensions [i]. But when the king approached the town with a great army, Ethelwald, having the prospect of certain destruction, made his escape, and fled first into Normandy, and thence into Northumberland; where he hoped, that the people, who had been recently subdued by Alfred, and who were impatient of peace, would, on 901.

[g] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 5. Hoveden, p. 421. [h] Chron. Sax. p. 99, 100. [i] Ibid. p. 100. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 352.

CHAP. II. the intelligence of that great prince's death, ſeize the firſt pretence or opportunity of rebellion. The event did not diſappoint his expectations: The Northumbrians declared for him [k]; and Ethelwald, having thus connected his intereſt with the Daniſh tribes, went beyond ſea, and collecting a body of theſe free-booters, he excited the hopes of all thoſe who had been accuſtomed to ſubſiſt by rapine and violence [l]. The Eaſt-Anglian Danes joined his party: The Five-burgers, who were ſeated in the heart of Mercia, began to put themſelves in motion; and the Engliſh found that they were again menaced with thoſe convulſions, from which the valour and policy of Alfred had ſo lately redeemed them. The rebels, headed by Ethelwald, made an incurſion into the counties of Gloceſter, Oxford, and Wilts; and having exerciſed their ravages in theſe places, they retired with their booty; before the king, who had aſſembled an army, was able to approach them. Edward, however, who was determined that his preparations ſhould not be fruitleſs, conducted his forces into Eaſt-Anglia, and retaliated the injuries which the inhabitants had committed, by ſpreading the like devaſtation among them. Satiated with revenge, and loaded with booty, he gave orders to retire: But the authority of thoſe ancient kings, which was feeble in peace, was not much better eſtabliſhed in the field; and the Kentiſh men, greedy of more ſpoil, ventured, contrary to repeated orders, to ſtay behind him, and to take up their quarters in Bury. This diſobedience proved in the iſſue fortunate to Edward. The Danes aſſaulted the Kentiſh men; but met with ſo ſtout a reſiſtance, that, though they gained the field of battle, they bought that advantage by the loſs of their braveſt leaders, and among the reſt, by that of

[k] Chron. Sax. p. 100. H. Hunt. lib. 5. p. 352. [l] Chron. Sax. p. 100. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 24.

Ethelwald, who perished in the action [m]. The king, freed from the fear of so dangerous a competitor, made peace on advantageous terms with the East-Angles [n]. CHAP. II.

In order to restore England to such a state of tranquillity as it was then capable of attaining, naught was wanting but the subjection of the Northumbrians, who, assisted by the scattered Danes in Mercia, continually infested the bowels of the kingdom. Edward, in order to divert the force of these enemies, prepared a fleet to attack them by sea; hoping, that, when his ships appeared on their coast, they must at least remain at home, and provide for their defence. But the Northumbrians were less anxious to secure their own property than greedy to commit spoil on their enemy; and concluding, that the chief strength of the English was embarked on board the fleet, they thought the opportunity favourable, and entered Edward's territories with all their forces. The king, who was prepared against this event, attacked them on their return at Tetenhall in the county of Stafford, put them to rout, recovered all the booty, and pursued them with great slaughter into their own country.

All the rest of Edward's reign was a scene of continued and successful action against the Northumbrians, the East-Angles, the Five-burgers, and the foreign Danes, who invaded him from Normandy and Britanny. Nor was he less provident in putting his kingdom in a posture of defence, than vigorous in assaulting the enemy. He fortified the towns of Chester, Eddesbury, Warwic, Cherbury, Buckingham, Towcester, Maldon, Huntingdon, and Colchester. He fought two signal battles, at Temsford and Maldon [o]. He vanquished Thurketill, a great Danish chief, and obliged him to retire with his fol-

[m] Chron. Sax. p. 101. Brompton, p. 832. Brompton, p. 832. Math. West. p. 181. Flor. Wigorn. p. 601.

[n] Chron. Sax. p. 102.

[o] Chron. Sax. p. 103.

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lowers into France, in queſt of ſpoil and adventures. He ſubdued the Eaſt-Angles, and forced them to ſwear allegiance to him: He expelled the two rival princes of Northumberland, Reginald and Sidroc, and acquired, for the preſent, the dominion of that province: Several tribes of the Britons were ſubjected by him; and even the Scots, who, during the reign of Egbert, had, under the conduct of Kenneth, their king, encreaſed their power, by the final ſubjection of the Picts, were nevertheleſs obliged to give him marks of ſubmiſſion [p]. In all theſe fortunate atchievements he was aſſiſted by the activity and prudence of his ſiſter Ethelfleda, who was widow of Ethelbert, earl of Mercia, and who, after her huſband's death, retained the government of that province. This princeſs, who had been reduced to extremity in child-bed, refuſed afterwards all commerce with her huſband; not from any weak ſuperſtition, as was common in that age, but becauſe ſhe deemed all domeſtic occupations unworthy of her maſculine and ambitious ſpirit [q]. She died before her brother; and Edward, during the remainder of his reign, took upon himſelf the immediate government of Mercia, which before had been entruſted to the authority of a governor [r]. The Saxon Chronicle fixes the death of this prince in 925 [s]: His kingdom devolved to Athelſtan, his natural ſon.

ATHELSTAN.

925. THE ſtain in this prince's birth was not, in thoſe times, deemed ſo conſiderable as to exclude him from the throne; and Athelſtan, being of an age, as well as of a capacity, fitted for government, obtained the preference to Edward's younger children, who, though legi-

[p] Chron. Sax. p. 110. Hoveden, p. 421. [q] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 5. Math. Weſt. p. 182. Ingulf, p. 28. Higden, p. 261.
[r] Chron. Sax. p. 110. Brompton, p. 831. [s] Page 110.

timate,

timate, were of too tender years to rule a nation so much exposed both to foreign invasion and to domestic convulsions. Some discontents, however, prevailed on his accession; and Alfred, a nobleman of considerable power, was thence encouraged to enter into a conspiracy against him. This incident is related by historians with circumstances, which the reader, according to the degree of credit he is disposed to give them, may impute either to the invention of monks, who forged them, or to their artifice, who found means of making them real. Alfred, it is said, being seized upon strong suspicions, but without any certain proof, firmly denied the conspiracy imputed to him; and in order to justify himself, he offered to swear to his innocence before the pope, whose person, it was supposed, contained such superior sanctity, that no one could presume to give a false oath in his presence, and yet hope to escape the immediate vengeance of heaven. The king accepted of the condition, and Alfred was conducted to Rome; where, either conscious of his innocence, or neglecting the superstition, to which he appealed, he ventured to make the oath required of him, before John, who then filled the papal chair. But no sooner had he pronounced the fatal words, than he fell into convulsions, of which, three days after, he expired. The king, as if the guilt of the conspirator were now fully ascertained, confiscated his estate, and made a present of it to the monastery of Malmesbury[t]; secure that no doubts would ever thenceforth be entertained concerning the justice of his proceedings. CHAP. II.

The dominion of Athelstan was no sooner established over his English subjects, than he endeavoured to give security to the government, by providing against the insurrections of the Danes, which had created so much disturbance to his predecessors. He marched into North-

[t] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 6. Spell. Conc. p. 407.

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umberland; and finding, that the inhabitants bore with impatience the Engliſh yoke, he thought it prudent to confer on Sithric, a Daniſh nobleman, the title of King, and to attach him to his intereſts, by giving him his ſiſter, Editha, in marriage. But this policy proved by accident the ſource of dangerous conſequences. Sithric died in a twelvemonth after; and his two ſons by a former marriage, Anlaf and Godfrid, founding pretenſions on their father's elevation, aſſumed the ſovereignty, without waiting for Athelſtan's conſent. They were ſoon expelled by the power of that monarch; and the former took ſhelter in Ireland, as the latter did in Scotland; where he received, during ſome time, protection from Conſtantine, who then enjoyed the crown of that kingdom. The Scottiſh prince, however, continually ſolicited, and even menaced, by Athelſtan, at laſt promiſed to deliver up his gueſt; but ſecretly deteſting this treachery, he gave Godfrid warning to make his eſcape[u]; and that fugitive, after ſubſiſting by pyracy for ſome years, freed the king, by his death, from any farther anxiety. Athelſtan, reſenting Conſtantine's behaviour, entered Scotland with an army; and ravaging the country with impunity[w], he reduced the Scots to ſuch diſtreſs, that their king was content to preſerve his crown, by making ſubmiſſions to the enemy. The Engliſh hiſtorians aſſert[x], that Conſtantine did homage to Athelſtan for his kingdom; and they add, that the latter prince, being urged by his courtiers to puſh the preſent favourable opportunity, and entirely ſubdue Scotland, replied, that it was more glorious to confer them conquer kingdoms[y]. But thoſe annals, ſo uncertain and imperfect in themſelves, loſe all credit, when national prepoſſeſſions and animoſities have place: And on that account, the Scotch hiſtorians, who, with-

[u] W. Malmſ. lib. 2. cap. 6. [w] Chron. Sax. p. 111. Hoveden, [illegible]. H. Huntingd. lib. 5. p. 351. [x] Hoveden, p. 422.
[y] W. Malmſ. lib. 2. cap. 6. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 212.

out

out having any more knowledge of the matter, ſtrenuouſly deny the fact, ſeem more worthy of belief. CHAP. II.

CONSTANTINE, whether he owed the retaining of his crown to the moderation of Athelſtan, who was unwilling to employ all his advantages againſt him, or to the policy of that prince, who eſteemed the humiliation of an enemy a greater acquiſition than the ſubjection of a diſcontented and mutinous people, thought the behaviour of the Engliſh monarch more an object of reſentment than of gratitude. He entered into a confederacy with Anlaf, who had collected a great body of Daniſh pyrates, whom he found hovering in the Iriſh ſeas; and with ſome Welſh princes, who were terrified at the growing power of Athelſtan: And all theſe allies made by concert an irruption with a great army into England. Athelſtan, collecting his forces, met the enemy near Brunſbury in Northumberland, and defeated them in a general engagement. This victory was chiefly aſcribed to the valour of Turketul, the Engliſh chancellor: For in thoſe turbulent ages, no one was ſo much occupied in civil employments, as wholly to lay aſide the military character[z].

THERE is a circumſtance, not unworthy of notice, which hiſtorians relate with regard to the tranſactions of this war. Anlaf, on the approach of the Engliſh army, thought, that he could not venture too much to enſure a fortunate event; and employing the artifice formerly practiſed by Alfred againſt the Danes, he entered the enemy's camp in the habit of a minſtrel. The ſtratagem was for the preſent attended with like ſucceſs. He gave ſuch ſatisfaction to the ſoldiers, who flocked about him, that they introduced him to the king's tent; and Anlaf, having played before that prince and his nobles during their repaſt, was diſmiſſed with a handſome reward. His pru-

[z] The office of chancellor among the Anglo Saxons reſembled more that of a ſecretary of ſtate, than that of our preſent chancellor. See Spelman in voce *Cancellarius*.

dence

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dence kept him from refuſing the preſent; but his pride determined him, on his departure, to bury it, while he fancied that he was uneſpied by all the world. But a ſoldier in Athelſtan's camp, who had formerly ſerved under Anlaf, had been ſtruck with ſome ſuſpicion on the firſt appearance of the minſtrel; and was engaged by curioſity to obſerve all his motions. He regarded this laſt action as a full proof of Anlaf's diſguiſe; and he immediately carried the intelligence to Athelſtan, who blamed him for not ſooner giving him information, that he might have ſeized his enemy. But the ſoldier told him, that, as he had formerly ſworn fealty to Anlaf, he could never have pardoned himſelf the treachery of betraying and ruining his ancient maſter; and that Athelſtan himſelf, after ſuch an inſtance of his criminal conduct, would have had equal reaſon to doubt of his allegiance. Athelſtan, having praiſed the generoſity of the ſoldier's principles, reflected on the incident, which he foreſaw might be attended with important conſequences. He removed his ſtation in the camp; and as a biſhop arrived that evening with a reinforcement of troops, (for the eccleſiaſtics were then no leſs warlike than the civil magiſtrates) he occupied with his train that very place which had been left vacant by the king's removal. The precaution of Athelſtan was found prudent: For no ſooner had darkneſs fallen, than Anlaf broke into the camp, and haſtening directly to the place where he had left the king's tent, put the biſhop to death, before he had time to prepare for his defence [a].

THERE fell ſeveral Daniſh and Welſh princes in the action of Brunſbury [b]; and Conſtantine and Anlaf made their eſcape with difficulty, leaving the greater part of their army on the field of battle. After this ſucceſs,

[a] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 6. Higden, p. 263. [b] Brompton, p. 839. Ingulf, p. 29.

Athelſtan

Athelſtan enjoyed his crown in tranquillity; and he is regarded as one of the ableſt and moſt active of thoſe ancient princes. He paſſed a remarkable law, which was calculated for the encouragement of commerce, and which it required ſome liberality of mind, in that age, to have deviſed: That a merchant, who had made three long ſea-voyages on his own account, ſhould be admitted to the rank of a thane or gentleman. This prince died at Gloceſter in the year 941 [c], after a reign of ſixteen years; and was ſucceeded by Edmund, his legitimate brother. CHAP. II.

EDMUND.

EDMUND, on his acceſſion, met with diſturbance from the reſtleſs Northumbrians, who lay in wait for every opportunity of breaking into rebellion. But marching ſuddenly with his forces into their country, he ſo overawed the rebels, that they endeavoured to appeaſe him by the moſt humble ſubmiſſions [d]. In order to give him the ſurer pledge of their obedience, they offered to embrace Chriſtianity; a religion which the Engliſh Danes had frequently profeſſed, when reduced to difficulties, but which, for that very reaſon, they regarded as a badge of ſervitude, and ſhook off as ſoon as a favourable opportunity offered. Edmund, truſting little to their ſincerity in this forced ſumiſſion, uſed the precaution of removing the Five-burgers from the town of Mercia, in which they had been allowed to ſettle; becauſe it was always found, that they took advantage of every commotion, and introduced the rebellious or foreign Danes into the heart of the kingdom. He alſo conquered Cumberland from the Britons; and conferred that territory on Malcolm king of Scotland, on condition that he ſhould do him homage for 941.

[c] Chron. Sax. p. 114.

[d] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 7. Brompton, p. 857.

it,

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it, and protect the north from all future incurſions of the Danes.

EDMUND was young when he came to the crown; yet was his reign ſhort, as his death was violent. One day, as he was ſolemnizing a feſtival in the county of Gloceſter, he remarked, that Leolf, a notorious robber, whom he had ſentenced to baniſhment, had yet the boldneſs to enter the hall where he himſelf dined, and to ſit at table with his attendants. Enraged at this inſolence, he ordered him to leave the room; but on his refuſing to obey, the king, whoſe temper, naturally choleric, was inflamed by this additional inſult, leaped on him himſelf, and ſeized him by the hair: But the ruffian, puſhed to extremity, drew his dagger, and gave Edmund a wound, of which he immediately expired. This event happened in the year 946, and in the ſixth year of the king's reign. Edmund left male-iſſue, but ſo young, that they were incapable of governing the kingdom; and his brother, Edred, was promoted to the crown.

EDRED.

946. THE reign of this prince, as thoſe of his predeceſſors, was diſturbed by the rebellions and incurſions of the Northumbrian Danes, who, though frequently quelled, were never entirely ſubdued, nor had ever paid a ſincere allegiance to the crown of England. The ſucceſſion of a new king ſeemed to them a favourable opportunity for ſhaking off the yoke; but on Edred's appearance with an army, they made him their wonted ſubmiſſions; and the king, having waſted the country with fire and ſword, as a puniſhment of their rebellion, obliged them to renew their oaths of allegiance; and he ſtraight retired with his forces. The obedience of the Danes laſted no longer than the preſent terror.

Provoked

Provoked at the devaſtations of Edred, and even reduced by neceſſity to ſubſiſt on plunder, they broke into a new rebellion, and were again ſubdued: But the king, now inſtructed by experience, took greater precautions againſt their future revolt. He fixed Engliſh garriſons in their moſt conſiderable towns; and placed over them an Engliſh governor, who might watch all their motions, and ſuppreſs any inſurrection on its firſt appearance. He obliged alſo Malcolm, king of Scotland, to renew his homage for the lands which he held in England. CHAP. II.

EDRED, though not unwarlike, nor unfit for active life, lay under the influence of the loweſt ſuperſtition, and had blindly delivered over his conſcience to the guidance of Dunſtan, commonly called St. Dunſtan, abbot of Glaſtenbury, whom he advanced to the higheſt offices, and who covered, under the appearance of ſanctity, the moſt violent and moſt inſolent ambition. Taking advantage of the implicit confidence repoſed in him by the king, this churchman imported into England a new order of monks, who much changed the ſtate of eccleſiaſtical affairs, and excited, on their firſt eſtabliſhment, the moſt violent commotions.

FROM the introduction of Chriſtianity among the Saxons, there had been monaſteries in England; and theſe eſtabliſhments had extremely multiplied, by the donations of the princes and nobles; whoſe ſuperſtition, derived from their ignorance and precarious life, and encreaſed by remorſes for the crimes into which they were ſo frequently betrayed, knew no other expedient for appeaſing the Deity than a profuſe liberality towards the eccleſiaſtics. But the monks had hitherto been a ſpecies of ſecular prieſts, who lived after the manner of the preſent canons or prebendaries, and were both intermingled, in ſome degree, with the world, and endeavoured to render themſelves uſeful to it. They were employed in the education of

CHAP. II.

of youth [e]: They had the diſpoſal of their own time and induſtry: They were not ſubjected to the rigid rules of an order: They had made no vows of implicit obedience to their ſuperiors [f]: And they ſtill retained the choice, without quitting the convent, either of a married or a ſingle life [g]. But a miſtaken piety had produced in Italy a new ſpecies of monks, called Benedictines; who, carrying farther the plauſible principles of mortification, ſecluded themſelves entirely from the world, renounced all claim to liberty, and made a merit of the moſt inviolable chaſtity. Theſe practices and principles, which ſuperſtition at firſt engendered, were greedily embraced and promoted by the policy of the court of Rome. The Roman pontiff, who was making every day great advances towards an abſolute ſovereignty over the eccleſiaſtics, perceived, that the celibacy of the clergy alone could break off entirely their connexion with the civil power, and depriving them of every other object of ambition, engage them to promote, with unceaſing induſtry, the grandeur of their own order. He was ſenſible, that, ſo long as the monks were indulged in marriage, and were permitted to rear families, they never could be ſubjected to ſtrict diſcipline, or reduced to that ſlavery under their ſuperiors, which was requiſite to procure to the mandates, iſſued from Rome, a ready and zealous obedience. Celibacy, therefore, began to be extolled, as the indiſpenſible duty of prieſts; and the pope undertook to make all the clergy throughout the weſtern world renounce at once the privilege of marriage: A fortunate policy, but at the ſame an undertaking the moſt difficult of any, ſince he had the ſtrongeſt propenſities of human nature to encounter, and found, that the ſame connexions with the female ſex, which generally

[e] Oſberne in Anglia Sacra, tom. 2. p. 92. [f] Oſberne, p. 91.

[g] See Wharton's notes to Anglia Sacra, tom. 2. p. 91. Gervaſe, p. 1645. Chron. Wint. MS. apud Spell. Conc. p. 434.

encourage

encourage devotion, were here unfavourable to the success of his project. It is no wonder, therefore, that this master-stroke of art should have met with violent contradiction, and that the interests of the hierarchy, and the inclinations of the priests, being now placed in this singular opposition, should, notwithstanding the continued efforts of Rome, have retarded the execution of that bold scheme, during the course of near three centuries. CHAP. II.

As the bishops and parochial clergy lived apart with their families, and were more connected with the world, the hopes of success with them were fainter, and the pretence for making them renounce marriage was much less plausible. But the pope, having cast his eye on the monks as the basis of his authority, was determined to reduce them under strict rules of obedience, to procure them the credit of sanctity by an appearance of the most rigid mortification, and to break off all their other tyes which might interfere with his spiritual policy. Under pretence, therefore, of reforming abuses, which were, in some degree, unavoidable in the ancient establishments, he had already spread over the southern countries of Europe the severe laws of the monastic life, and began to form attempts towards a like innovation in England. The favourable opportunity offered itself (and it was greedily seized) arising from the weak superstition of Edred, and the violent impetuous character of Dunstan.

DUNSTAN was born of noble parents in the west of England; and being educated under his uncle, Aldhelm, then Archbishop of Canterbury, had betaken himself to the ecclesiastical life, and had acquired some character in the court of Edmund. He was, however, represented to that prince as a man of licentious manners [h]; and finding his fortune blasted by these suspicions, his ardent am-

[h] Osborne, p. 95. Matth. West. p. 187.

bition

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bition prompted him to repair his indiſcretions by running into an oppoſite extreme. He ſecluded himſelf entirely from the world; he framed a cell ſo ſmall that he could neither ſtand erect in it, nor ſtretch out his limbs during his repoſe; and he here employed himſelf perpetually either in devotion or in manual labour [i]. It is probable, that his brain became gradually crazed by theſe ſolitary occupations, and that his head was filled with chimeras, which, being believed by himſelf and his ſtupid votaries, procured him the general character of ſanctity among the people. He fancied, that the devil, among the frequent viſits, which he paid him, was one day more earneſt than uſual in his temptations; till Dunſtan, provoked at his importunity, ſeized him by the noſe with a pair of red hot pincers, as he put his head into the cell; and he held him there, till that malignant ſpirit made the whole neighbourhood reſound with his bellowings. This notable exploit was ſeriouſly credited and extolled by the public; it is tranſmitted to poſterity by one who, conſidering the age in which he lived, may paſs for a writer of ſome elegance [k]; and it inſured to Dunſtan, a reputation, which no real piety, much leſs virtue, could, even in the moſt enlightened period, have ever procured him with the people.

SUPPORTED by the character obtained in his retreat, Dunſtan appeared again in the world; and gained ſuch an aſcendant over Edred, who had ſucceeded to the crown, as made him, not only the director of that prince's conſcience, but his counſellor in the moſt momentous affairs of government. He was placed at the head of the treaſury [l], and being thus poſſeſſed both of power at court, and of credit with the populace, he was enabled to attempt with ſucceſs the moſt arduous enterprizes. Find-

[i] Oſberne, p. 96. [k] Oſberne, p. 97. [l] Oſberne, p. 102. Wallingford, p. 541.

ing,

ing, that his advancement had been owing to the opinion of his auſterity, he profeſſed himſelf a partizan of the rigid monaſtic rules; and after introducing that reformation into the convents of Glaſtenbury and Abingdon, he endeavoured to render it univerſal in the kingdom.

THE minds of men were already well prepared for this innovation. The praiſes of an inviolable chaſtity had been carried to the higheſt extravagance by ſome of the firſt preachers of Chriſtianity among the Saxons: The pleaſures of love had been repreſented as incompatible with Chriſtian perfection: And a total abſtinence from all commerce with the ſex was deemed ſuch a meritorious pennance, as was ſufficient to atone for the greateſt enormities. The conſequence ſeemed natural, that thoſe at leaſt who officiated at the altar ſhould be clear of this pollution; and when the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, which was now creeping in [m], was once fully eſtabliſhed, the reverence to the real body of Chriſt in the euchariſt beſtowed on this argument an additional force and influence. The monks knew how to avail themſelves of all theſe popular topics, and to ſet off their own character to the beſt advantage. They affected the greateſt auſterity of life and manners: They indulged themſelves in the higheſt ſtrains of devotion: They inveighed bitterly againſt the vices and pretended luxury of the age: They were particularly vehement againſt the diſſolute lives of the ſecular clergy, their rivals: Every inſtance of libertiniſm in any individual of that order was repreſented as a general corruption: And where other topics of defamation were wanting, their marriage became a ſure ſubject of invective, and their wives received the name of *concubine*, or other more opprobrious appellation.

[m] Spell. Conc. vol. 1. p. 452.

CHAP. II. The secular clergy, on the other hand, who were numerous, and rich, and possessed of the ecclesiastical dignities, defended themselves with vigour, and endeavoured to retaliate upon their adversaries. The people were thrown into agitation; and few instances occur of more violent dissentions, excited by the most material differences in religion; or rather by the most frivolous: Since it is a just remark, that the more affinity there is between theological parties, the greater commonly is their animosity.

THE progress of the monks, which was become considerable, was somewhat retarded by the death of Edred, their partizan, who expired after a reign of nine years [n]. He left children; but as they were infants, his nephew, Edwy, son of Edmund, was placed on the throne.

EDWY.

955. EDWY, at the time of his accession, was not above sixteen or seventeen years of age, was possessed of the most amiable figure, and was even endowed, according to authentic accounts, with the most promising virtues [o]. He would have been the favourite of his people, had he not unhappily, at the commencement of his reign, been engaged in a controversy with the monks, whose rage neither the graces of the body nor virtues of the mind could mitigate, and who have pursued his memory with the same unrelenting vengeance, which they exercised against his person and dignity during his short and unfortunate reign. There was a beautiful princess of the royal blood, called Elgiva, who had made impression on the tender heart of Edwy; and as he was of an age, when the force of the passions first begins to be felt, he had ventured, contrary to the advice of his gravest

[n] Chron. Sax. p. 115. [o] H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 356.

coun-

counſellors, and the remonſtrances of the more dignified ecclesiaſtics [p], to eſpouſe her; though ſhe was within the degrees of affinity prohibited by the canon-law [q]. As the auſterity, affected by the monks, made them particularly violent on this occaſion, Edwy entertained a ſtrong prepoſſeſſion againſt them; and ſeemed on that account determined not to ſecond their project, of expelling the ſeculars from all the convents, and of poſſeſſing themſelves of thoſe rich eſtabliſhments. War was therefore declared between the king and the monks; and the former ſoon found reaſon to repent his provoking ſuch dangerous enemies. On the day of his coronation, his nobility were aſſembled in a great hall, and were indulging themſelves in that riot and diſorder, which, from the example of their German anceſtors, had become habitual to the Engliſh [r]; when Edwy, attracted by ſofter pleaſures, retired into the Queen's apartment, and in that privacy, gave reins to his fondneſs towards his wife, which was only moderately checked by the preſence of her mother. Dunſtan conjectured the reaſon of the king's retreat; and carrying along with him, Odo, archbiſhop of Canterbury, over whom he had gained an abſolute aſcendant, he burſt into the apartment, upbraided Edwy with his laſciviouſneſs, probably beſtowed on the queen the moſt opprobrious epithet that can be applied to her ſex, and tearing him from her arms, puſhed him back, in a diſgraceful manner, into the banquet of the nobles [s]. Edwy, though young and oppoſed by the prejudices of the people, found an opportunity of taking revenge for this public inſult. He queſtioned Dunſtan concerning the adminiſtration of the treaſury during the reign of his predeceſſor [t]; and when that miniſter refuſed to give any

CHAP. II.

[p] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 7. [q] Ibid. [r] Wallingford, p. 542. [s] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 7. Oſberne, p. 83, 105. M. Weſt. p. 195, 196. [t] Wallingford, p. 542. Alur. Beverl. p. 122.

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account of money, expended, as he affirmed, by orders of the late king, he accuſed him of malverſation in his office, and baniſhed him the kingdom. But Dunſtan's cabal was not unactive during his abſence: They filled the public with high panegyrics on his ſanctity: They exclaimed againſt the impiety of the king and queen: And having poiſoned the minds of the people by theſe declamations, they proceeded to ſtill more outrageous violences againſt the royal authority. Archbiſhop Odo ſent into the palace a party of ſoldiers, who ſeized the queen; and having burned her face with a red hot iron in order to deſtroy that fatal beauty, which had ſeduced Edwy, they carried her by force into Ireland, there to remain in perpetual exile[u]. Edwy, finding it vain to reſiſt, was obliged to conſent to his divorce, which was pronounced by Odo[w]; and a cataſtrophe, ſtill more diſmal, awaited the unhappy Elgiva. That amiable princeſs, being cured of her wounds, and having even obliterated the ſcars, with which Odo had hoped to deface her beauty, returned into England, and was flying to the embraces of the king, whom ſhe ſtill regarded as her huſband; when ſhe fell into the hands of a party, whom the primate had ſent to intercept her. Nothing but her death could now give ſecurity to Odo and the monks; and the moſt cruel death was requiſite to ſatiate their vengeance. She was hamſtringed; and expired a few days after at Gloceſter in the moſt acute torments[x].

The Engliſh, blinded with ſuperſtition, inſtead of being ſhocked with this inhumanity, exclaimed that the misfortunes of Edwy and his ſpouſe were a juſt judgment for their diſſolute contempt of the eccleſiaſtical ſtatutes. They even proceeded to rebellion againſt their ſovereign; and having placed Edgar at their head, the younger

[u] Oſberne, p. 84. Gervaſe, p. 1644. [w] Hoveden, p. 425.
[x] Oſberne, p. 84. Gervaſe, p. 1645, 1646.

brother

brother of Edwy, a boy of thirteen years of age, they soon put him in poſſeſſion of Mercia, Northumberland, Eaſt-Anglia; and chaced Edwy into the ſouthern counties. That it might not be doubtful at whoſe inſtigation this revolt was undertaken; Dunſtan returned into England, and took upon him the government of Edgar and his party. He was firſt inſtalled in the ſee of Worceſter, then in that of London [y], and, on Odo's death, and the violent expulſion of Brighthelm, his ſucceſſor, in that of Canterbury [z]; all which he long kept poſſeſſion of. Odo is tranſmitted to us by the monks under the character of a man of piety: Dunſtan was even canonized; and is one of thoſe numerous ſaints of the ſame ſtamp who diſgrace the Romiſh calendar. Meanwhile the unhappy Edwy was excommunicated [a], and purſued with unrelenting vengeance; but his death, which happened ſoon after, freed his enemies from all farther inquietude, and gave Edgar peaceable poſſeſſion of the government *.

CHAP. II.

EDGAR.

THIS prince, who mounted the throne in ſuch early youth, ſoon diſcovered an excellent capacity in the adminiſtration of affairs; and his reign is one of the moſt fortunate that we meet with in the ancient Engliſh hiſtory. He ſhowed no averſion to war; he made the wiſeſt preparations againſt invaders: And by this vigour and foreſight, he was enabled, without any danger of ſuffering inſults, to indulge his inclination towards peace, and to employ himſelf in ſupporting and improving the internal government of his kingdom. He maintained a body of diſciplined troops; which he quartered in the

[y] Chron. Sax. p. 117. Flor. Wigorn. p. 605. Wallingford, p. 544.
[z] Hoveden, p. 425. Oſberne, p. 109. [a] Brompton, p. 863.
* See note [B] at the end of the volume.

CHAP. II.

north, in order to keep the mutinous Northumbrians in ſubjection, and to repel the inroads of the Scots. He built and ſupported a powerful navy [b]; and that he might retain the ſeamen in the practice of their duty, and perpetually preſent a formidable armament to his enemies, he ſtationed three ſquadrons off the coaſt, and ordered them to make, from time to time, the circuit of his dominions *. The foreign Danes dared not to approach a country which appeared in ſuch a poſture of defence: The domeſtic Danes ſaw inevitable deſtruction to be the conſequence of their tumults and inſurrections: The neighbouring ſovereigns, the king of Scotland, the princes of Wales, of the Iſle of Man, of the Orkneys, and even of Ireland [c], were reduced to pay ſubmiſſions to ſo formidable a monarch. He carried his ſuperiority to a great height, and might have excited an univerſal combination againſt him, had not his power been ſo well eſtabliſhed, as to deprive his enemies of all hopes of ſhaking it. It is ſaid, that, reſiding once at Cheſter, and having propoſed to go by water to the abbey of St. John the Baptiſt, he obliged eight of his tributary princes to row him in a barge upon the Dee [d]. The Engliſh hiſtorians are fond of mentioning the name of Kenneth III. king of Scots among the number: The Scottiſh hiſtorians either deny the fact, or aſſert, that their king, if ever he acknowledged himſelf a vaſſal to Edgar, did him homage, not for his crown, but for the dominions which he held in England.

But the chief means, by which Edgar maintained his authority, and preſerved public peace, was paying court to Dunſtan and the monks, who had at firſt placed him on the throne, and who, by their pretenſions to ſuperior ſanctity and purity of manners, had acquired an aſcendant

[b] Higden, p. 265.

[c] Spell. Conc. p. 432.

* See note [C] at the end of the volume.

[d] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 406. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 356.

over

over the people. He favoured their scheme for dispossessing the secular canons of all the monasteries [e]; he bestowed preferment on none but their partizans; he allowed Dunstan to resign the see of Worcester into the hands of Oswald, one of his creatures [f], and to place Ethelwold, another of them, in that of Winchester [g]; he consulted these prelates in the administration of all ecclesiastical, and even in that of many civil affairs; and though the vigour of his own genius prevented him from being implicitly guided by them, the king and the bishops found such advantages in their mutual agreement, that they always acted in concert, and united their influence in preserving the peace and tranquillity of the kingdom. CHAP. II.

In order to compleat the great work of placing the new order of monks in all the convents, Edgar summoned a general council of the prelates and the heads of the religious orders. He here inveighed against the dissolute lives of the secular clergy; the smallness of their tonsure, which, it is probable, maintained no longer any resemblance to the crown of thorns; their negligence in attending the exercise of their function; their mixing with the laity in the pleasures of gaming, hunting, dancing, and singing; and their openly living with concubines, by which it is commonly supposed he meant their wives. He then turned himself to Dunstan the primate; and in the name of king Edred, whom he supposed to look down from heaven with indignation against all those enormities, he thus addressed him. "It is you, Dunstan, by whose "advice I founded monasteries, built churches, and ex- "pended my treasure in the support of religion and reli- "gious houses. You was my counsellor and assistant in "all my schemes: You was the director of my con-

[e] Chron. Sax. p. 117, 118. W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 425, 426. Osberne, p. 112. [f] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 425. [g] Gervase, p. 1646. Brompton, p. 864. Flor. Wigorn. p. 606. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 27, 28.

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" ſcience: To you I was obedient in all things. When " did you call for ſupplies, which I refuſed you? Was " my aſſiſtance ever wanting to the poor? Did I deny " ſupport and eſtabliſhments to the clergy and the con- " vents? Did I not hearken to your inſtructions, who " told me, that theſe charities were, of all others, the " moſt grateful to my Maker, and fixed a perpetual fund " for the ſupport of religion? And are all our pious " endeavours now fruſtrated by the diſſolute lives of the " prieſts? Not that I throw any blame on you: You " have reaſoned, beſought, inculcated, inveighed: But " it now behoves you to uſe ſharper and more vigorous " remedies; and conjoining your ſpiritual authority with " the civil power, to purge effectually the temple of God " from thieves and intruders [h]." It is eaſy to imagine, that this harangue had the deſired effect; and that, when the king and prelates thus concurred with the popular prejudices, it was not long before the monks prevailed, and eſtabliſhed their new diſcipline in almoſt all the convents.

We may remark, that the declamations againſt the ſecular clergy are, both here and in all the hiſtorians, conveyed in general terms; and as that order of men are commonly reſtrained by the decency of their character, it is difficult to believe, that the complaints againſt their diſſolute manners could be ſo univerſally juſt as is pretended. It is more probable, that the monks paid court to the populace by an affected auſterity of life; and, repreſenting the moſt innocent liberties, taken by the other clergy, as great and unpardonable enormities, thereby prepared the way for the encreaſe of their own power and influence. Edgar, however, like a true politician, concurred with the prevailing party; and he even indulged them in pretenſions, which, though they might, when complied with, engage the monks to ſupport royal autho-

[h] Abbas Rieval. p. 360, 361. Spell. Conc. p. 476, 477, 478.

rity

rity during his own reign, proved afterwards dangerous to his ſucceſſors, and gave diſturbance to the whole civil power. He ſeconded the policy of the court of Rome, in granting to ſome monaſteries an exemption from epiſcopal juriſdiction: He allowed the convents, even thoſe of royal foundation, to uſurp the election of their own abbot: And he admitted their forgeries of ancient charters, by which, from the pretended grant of former kings, they aſſumed many privileges and immunities [i]. CHAP. II.

THESE merits of Edgar have procured him the higheſt panegyrics from the monks; and he is tranſmitted to us not only under the character of a conſummate ſtateſman and an active prince, praiſes to which he ſeems to have been juſtly entitled, but under that of a great ſaint and a man of virtue. But nothing could more betray both his hypocriſy in inveighing againſt the licentiouſneſs of the ſecular clergy, and the intereſted ſpirit of his partizans, in beſtowing ſuch eulogies on his piety, than the uſual tenor of his conduct, which was licentious to the higheſt degree, and violated every law, human and divine. Yet thoſe very monks, who, as we are told by Ingulf, a very ancient hiſtorian, had no idea of any moral or religious merit, except chaſtity and obedience, not only connived at his enormities, but loaded him with the greateſt praiſes. Hiſtory, however, has preſerved ſome inſtances of his amours, from which, as from a ſpecimen, we may form a conjecture of the reſt.

EDGAR broke into a convent, carried off Editha, a nun, by force, and even committed violence on her perſon [k]. For this act of ſacrilege he was reprimanded by Dunſtan; and that he might reconcile himſelf to the church, he was obliged, not to ſeparate from his miſtreſs,

[i] Chron. Sax. p. 118. W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 8. Seldeni Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 149. 157. [k] W. Malmeſ. lib 2. cap. 8. Oſberne, p. 3. Diceto, p. 457. Higden, p. 265, 267, 268. Spell. Conc. p. 481.

but

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but to abſtain from wearing his crown during ſeven years, and to deprive himſelf ſo long of that vain ornament [1]: A puniſhment very unequal to that which had been inflicted on the unfortunate Edwy, who, for a marriage, which, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, could only deſerve the name of irregular, was expelled his kingdom, ſaw his queen treated with ſingular barbarity, was loaded with calumnies, and has been repreſented to us under the moſt odious colours. Such is the aſcendant which may be attained, by hypocriſy and cabal, over mankind!

THERE was another miſtreſs of Edgar's, with whom he firſt formed a connexion by a kind of accident. Paſſing one day by Andover, he lodged in the houſe of a nobleman, whoſe daughter, being endowed with all the graces of perſon and behaviour, enflamed him at firſt ſight with the higheſt deſire; and he reſolved by any expedient to gratify it. As he had not leiſure to employ courtſhip or addreſs for attaining his purpoſe, he went directly to her mother, declared the violence of his paſſion, and deſired that the young lady might be allowed to paſs that very night with him. The mother was a woman of virtue, and determined not to diſhonour her daughter and her family by compliance; but being well acquainted with the impetuoſity of the king's temper, ſhe thought it would be eaſier, as well as ſafer, to deceive than refuſe him. She feigned therefore a ſubmiſſion to his will; but ſecretly ordered a waiting-maid, of no diſagreeable figure, to ſteal into the king's bed, after all the company ſhould be retired to reſt. In the morning, before day-break, the damſel, agreeably to the injunctions of her miſtreſs, offered to retire; but Edgar, who had no reſerve in his pleaſures, and whoſe love to his bedfellow was rather enflamed by enjoyment, refuſed his conſent, and employed force and entreaties to detain her. Elfleda

[1] Oſberne, p. 111.

(for

(for that was the name of the maid) truſting to her own charms, and to the love with which, ſhe hoped, ſhe had now inſpired the king, made probably but a faint reſiſtance; and the return of light diſcovered the deceit to Edgar. He had paſſed a night ſo much to his ſatisfaction, that he expreſſed no diſpleaſure with the old lady on account of her fraud; his love was tranferred to Elfleda; ſhe became his favourite miſtreſs; and maintained her aſcendant over him, till his marriage with Elfrida [m].

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THE circumſtances of his marriage with this lady were more ſingular, and more criminal. Elfrida was daughter and heir of Olgar, earl of Devonſhire; and though ſhe had been educated in the country, and had never appeared at court, ſhe had filled all England with the reputation of her beauty. Edgar himſelf, who was indifferent to no accounts of this nature, found his curioſity excited by the frequent panegyrics which he heard of Elfrida; and reflecting on her noble birth, he reſolved, if he found her charms anſwerable to their fame, to obtain poſſeſſion of her on honourable terms. He communicated his intention to earl Athelwold, his favourite; but uſed the precaution, before he made any advances to her parents, to order that nobleman, on ſome pretence, to pay them a viſit, and to bring him a certain account of the beauty of their daughter. Athelwold, when introduced to the young lady, found general report to have fallen ſhort of the truth; and being actuated by the moſt vehement love, he determined to ſacrifice to this new paſſion his fidelity to his maſter, and to the truſt repoſed in him. He returned to Edgar, and told him, that the riches alone, and high quality of Elfrida, had been the ground of the admiration paid her, and that her charms, far from being any wiſe extraordinary, would have been overlooked in a woman of inferior ſtation. When he had, by this deceit, di-

[m] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 8. Higden, p. 268.

verted

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verted the king from his purpoſe, he took an opportunity, after ſome interval, of turning again the converſation on Elfrida: He remarked, that, though the parentage and fortune of the lady had not produced on him, as on others, any illuſion with regard to her beauty, he could not forbear reflecting, that ſhe would on the whole be an advantageous match for him, and might, by her birth and riches, make him ſufficient compenſation for the homelineſs of her perſon. If the king, therefore, gave his approbation, he was determined to make propoſals in his own behalf to the earl of Devonſhire, and doubted not to obtain his, as well as the young lady's conſent to the marriage. Edgar, pleaſed with an expedient for eſtabliſhing his favourite's fortune, not only exhorted him to execute his purpoſe, but forwarded his ſucceſs by his recommendations to the parents of Elfrida; and Athelwold was ſoon made happy in the poſſeſſion of his miſtreſs. Dreading, however, the detection of the artifice, he employed every pretence for detaining Elfrida in the country, and for keeping her at a diſtance from Edgar.

THE violent paſſion of Athelwold had rendered him blind to the neceſſary conſequences, which muſt attend his conduct, and the advantages, which the numerous enemies, that always purſue a royal favourite, would, by its means, be able to make againſt him. Edgar was ſoon informed of the truth; but before he would execute vengeance on Athelwold's treachery, he reſolved to ſatisfy himſelf with his own eyes of the certainty and full extent of his guilt. He told him, that he intended to pay him a viſit in his caſtle, and be introduced to the acquaintance of his new-married wife; and Athelwold, as he could not refuſe this honour, only craved leave to go before him a few hours, that he might the better prepare every thing for his reception. He then diſcovered the whole matter to Elfrida; and begged her, if ſhe had any regard, either

to

to her own honour or his life, to conceal from Edgar, by every circumstance of dress and behaviour, that fatal beauty, which had seduced him from fidelity to his friend, and had betrayed him into so many falsehoods. Elfrida promised compliance, though nothing was farther from her intentions. She deemed herself little beholden to Athelwold for a passion, which had deprived her of a crown; and knowing the force of her own charms, she did not despair even yet of reaching that dignity, of which her husband's artifice had bereaved her. She appeared before the king with all the advantages, which the richest attire, and the most engaging airs could bestow upon her, and she excited at once in his bosom the highest love towards herself, and the most furious desire of revenge against her husband. He knew, however, to dissemble these passions; and seducing Athelwold into a wood, on pretence of hunting, he stabbed him with his own hand, and soon after publickly espoused Elfrida [n].

Before we conclude our account of this reign, we must mention two circumstances, which are remarked by historians. The reputation of Edgar allured a great number of foreigners to visit his court; and he gave them encouragement to reside in England [o]. We are told, that they imported all the vices of their respective countries, and contributed to corrupt the simple manners of the natives [p]: But as this simplicity of manners, so highly and often so injudiciously extolled, did not preserve them from barbarity and treachery, the greatest of all vices, and the most incident to a rude uncultivated people, we ought perhaps to deem their acquaintance with foreigners rather an advantage; as it tended to enlarge their views,

[n] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 8. Hoveden, p. 426. Brompton, p. 865, 866. Flor. Wigorn. p. 626. Higden, p. 268.

[o] Chron. Sax. p. 116. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 356. Brompton, p. 865.

[p] W. Malmes. lib. 2. cap. 8.

and

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and to cure them of thoſe illiberal prejudices and ruſtic manners, to which iſlanders are often ſubject.

ANOTHER remarkable incident of this reign was the extirpation of wolves from England. This advantage was attained by the induſtrious policy of Edgar. He took great pains in hunting and purſuing thoſe ravenous animals; and when he found, that they had all taken ſhelter in the mountains and foreſts of Wales, he changed the tribute of money impoſed on the Welſh princes by Athelſtan, his predeceſſor [q], into an annual tribute of three hundred heads of wolves; which produced ſuch diligence in hunting them, that the animal has been no more ſeen in this iſland.

EDGAR died, after a reign of ſixteen years, and in the thirty-third of his age. He was ſucceeded by Edward, whom he had by his firſt marriage with the daughter of earl Ordmer.

EDWARD the Martyr.

957. THE ſucceſſion of this prince, who was only fifteen years of age at his father's death, did not take place without much difficulty and oppoſition. Elfrida, his ſtep-mother, had a ſon, Ethelred, ſeven years old, whom ſhe attempted to raiſe to the throne: She affirmed, that Edgar's marriage with the mother of Edward was expoſed to inſuperable objections; and as ſhe had poſſeſſed great credit with her huſband, ſhe had found means to acquire partizans, who ſeconded all her pretenſions. But the title of Edward was ſupported by many advantages. He was appointed ſucceſſor by the will of his father [r]: He was approaching to man's eſtate, and might ſoon be able to take into his own hands the reins of government: The principal nobility, dreading the imperious temper of

[q] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 6. Brompton, p. 838.

[r] Hoveden, p. 427. Eadmer, p. 3.

Elfrida,

Elfrida, were averſe to her ſon's government, which muſt enlarge her authority, and probably put her in poſſeſſion of the regency: Above all, Dunſtan, whoſe character of ſanctity had given him the higheſt credit with the people, had eſpouſed the cauſe of Edward, over whom he had already acquired a great aſcendant [s]; and he was determined to execute the will of Edgar in his favour. To cut off all oppoſite pretenſions, Dunſtan reſolutely anointed and crowned the young prince at Kingſton; and the whole kingdom, without farther diſpute, ſubmitted to him [t].

It was of great importance to Dunſtan and the monks, to place on the throne a king favourable to their cauſe: The ſecular clergy had ſtill partizans in England, who wiſhed to ſupport them in the poſſeſſion of the convents, and of the eccleſiaſtical authority. On the firſt intelligence of Edgar's death, Alfere, duke of Mercia, expelled the new orders of monks from all the monaſteries which lay within his juriſdiction [u]; but Elfwin, duke of Eaſt-Anglia, and Brithnot, duke of the Eaſt-Saxons, protected them within their territories, and inſiſted upon the execution of the late laws enacted in their favour. In order to ſettle this controverſy, there were ſummoned ſeveral ſynods, which, according to the practice of thoſe times, conſiſted partly of eccleſiaſtical members, partly of the lay nobility. The monks were able to prevail in theſe aſſemblies; though, as it appears, contrary to the ſecret wiſhes, if not the declared inclination, of the leading men in the nation [w]. They had more invention in forging miracles to ſupport their cauſe; or having been ſo fortunate as to obtain, by their pretended auſterities, the character of piety, their miracles were better credited by the populace.

[s] Eadmer, ex edit. Seldeni, p. 3. Hoveden, p. 427. Oſberne, p. 113. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 9. Hoveden, p. 427. Brompton, p. 870. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607.

[t] W. Malm. lib. 2. cap. 9.

[u] Chron. Sax. p. 123. W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 9.

[w] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 9.

In

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In one ſynod, Dunſtan, finding the majority of votes againſt him, roſe up, and informed the audience, that he had, in that inſtant, received an immediate revelation in behalf of the monks: The aſſembly was ſo aſtoniſhed at this intelligence, or probably ſo overawed by the populace, that they proceeded no farther in their deliberations. In another ſynod, a voice iſſued from the crucifix, and informed the members, that the eſtabliſhment of the monks was founded on the will of heaven, and could not be oppoſed without impiety [x]. But the miracle performed in the third ſynod was ſtill more alarming: The floor of the hall in which the aſſembly met, ſunk of a ſudden, and a great number of the members were either bruiſed or killed by the fall. It was remarked, that Dunſtan had that day prevented the king from attending the ſynod, and that the beam, on which his own chair ſtood, was the only one that did not ſink under the weight of the aſſembly [y]: But theſe circumſtances, inſtead of begetting any ſuſpicion of contrivance, were regarded as the ſureſt proof of the immediate interpoſition of providence, in behalf of theſe favourites of heaven.

Edward lived four years after his acceſſion, and there paſſed nothing memorable during his reign. His death alone was memorable and tragical [z]. This young prince was endowed with the moſt amiable innocence of manners; and as his own intentions were always pure, he was incapable of entertaining any ſuſpicion againſt others. Though his ſtepmother had oppoſed his ſucceſſion, and had raiſed a party in favour of her own ſon, he always ſhowed her marks of regard, and even expreſſed, on all

[x] W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 9. Oſberne, p. 112. Gervaſe, p. 1647. Brompton, p. 870. Higden, p. 269. [y] Chron. Sax. p. 124. W. Malmeſ. lib. 2. cap. 9. Hoveden, p. 427. H. Hunting. lib. 5. p. 357. Gervaſe, p. 1647. Brompton, p. 870. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607. Higden, p. 269. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 29. [z] Chron. Sax. p. 124.

occaſions,

occaſions, the moſt tender affection towards his brother. He was hunting one day in Dorſetſhire; and being led by the chace near Corſe-caſtle, where Elfrida reſided, he took the opportunity of paying her a viſit, unattended by any of his retinue, and he thereby preſented her with the opportunity, which ſhe had long wiſhed for. After he had mounted his horſe, he deſired ſome liquor to be brought him: While he was holding the cup to his head, a ſervant of Elfrida approached him, and gave him a ſtab behind. The prince, finding himſelf wounded, put ſpurs to his horſe; but becoming faint by loſs of blood, he fell from the ſaddle, his foot ſtuck in the ſtirrup, and he was dragged along by his unruly horſe, till he expired. Being tracked by the blood, his body was found, and was privately interred at Wareham by his ſervants.

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THE youth and innocence of this prince, with his tragical death, begat ſuch compaſſion among the people, that they believed miracles to be wrought at his tomb; and they gave him the appellation of martyr, though his murder had no connexion with any religious principle or opinion. Elfrida built monaſteries, and performed many penances, in order to atone for her guilt; but could never, by all her hypocriſy or remorſes, recover the good opinion of the public, though ſo eaſily deluded in thoſe ignorant ages.

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Ethelred——Settlement of the Normans——Edmund Ironſide——Canute——Harold Harefoot——Hardicanute——Edward the Confeſſor——Harold.

ETHELRED.

CHAP. III. 978.

THE freedom, which England had ſo long enjoyed from the depredations of the Danes, ſeems to have proceeded, partly from the eſtabliſhments, which that pyratical nation had obtained in the north of France, and which employed all their ſuperfluous hands to people and maintain them; partly from the vigour and warlike ſpirit of a long race of Engliſh princes, who preſerved the kingdom in a poſture of defence by ſea and land, and either prevented or repelled every attempt of the invaders. But a new generation of men being now ſprung up in the northern regions, who could no longer diſburthen themſelves on Normandy; the Engliſh had reaſon to dread, that the Danes would again viſit an iſland, to which they were invited, both by the memory of their paſt ſucceſſes, and by the expectation of aſſiſtance from their countrymen, who, though long eſtabliſhed in the kingdom, were not yet thoroughly incorporated with the natives, nor had entirely forgot their inveterate habits of war and depredation. And as the reigning prince was a minor, and even when he attained to man's eſtate, never diſcovered either courage or capacity ſufficient to govern his own ſubjects, much leſs to repel a formidable enemy, the people might juſtly apprehend the worſt calamities from ſo dangerous a criſis.

THE Danes, before they durſt attempt any important enterprize againſt England, made an inconſiderable deſcent

by way of trial; and having landed from ſeven veſſels near Southampton, they ravaged the country, enriched themſelves by ſpoil, and departed with impunity. Six years after, they made a like attempt in the weſt, and met with like ſucceſs. The invaders, having now found affairs in a very different ſituation from that in which they formerly appeared, encouraged their countrymen to aſſemble a greater force, and to hope for more conſiderable advantages. They landed in Eſſex under the command of two leaders; and having defeated and ſlain at Maldon, Brithnot, duke of that county, who ventured, with a ſmall body, to attack them, they ſpread their devaſtations over all the neighbouring provinces. In this extremity, Ethelred, to whom hiſtorians give the epithet of the *Unready*, inſtead of rouſing his people to defend with courage their honour and their property, hearkened to the advice of Siricius, archbiſhop of Canterbury, which was ſeconded by many of the degenerate nobility; and paying the enemy the ſum of ten thouſand pounds, he bribed them to depart the kingdom. This ſhameful expedient was attended with the ſucceſs which might be expected. The Danes next year appeared off the eaſtern coaſt, in hopes of ſubduing a people, who defended themſelves by their money, which invited aſſailants, inſtead of their arms, which repelled them. But the Engliſh, ſenſible of their folly, had, in the interval, aſſembled in a great council, and had determined to collect at London a fleet capable of giving battle to the enemy [a]; though that judicious meaſure failed of ſucceſs, from the treachery of Alfric, duke of Mercia, whoſe name is infamous in the annals of that age, by the calamities which his repeated perfidy brought upon his country. This nobleman had, in 983, ſucceeded to his father, Alfere, in that extenſive command; but being deprived of it two years after, and baniſhed the

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981.

991.

[a] Chron. Sax. p. 126.

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kingdom, he was obliged to employ all his intrigue, and all his power, which was too great for a ſubject, to be reſtored to his country, and reinſtated in his authority. Having had experience of the credit and malevolence of his enemies, he thenceforth truſted for ſecurity, not to his ſervices or to the affections of his fellow-citizens, but to the influence which he had obtained over his vaſſals, and to the public calamities, which, he thought, muſt, in every revolution, render his aſſiſtance neceſſary. Having fixed this reſolution, he determined to prevent all ſuch ſucceſſes as might eſtabliſh the royal authority, or render his own ſituation dependant or precarious. As the Engliſh had formed the plan of ſurrounding and deſtroying the Daniſh fleet in harbour, he privately informed the enemy of their danger; and when they put to ſea, in conſequence of this intelligence, he deſerted to them, with the ſquadron under his command, the night before the engagement, and thereby diſappointed all the efforts of his countrymen [b]. Ethelred, enraged at his perfidy, ſeized his ſon, Alfgar, and ordered his eyes to be put out [c]. But ſuch was the power of Alfric, that he again forced himſelf into authority; and though he had given this ſpecimen of his character, and received this grievous provocation, it was found neceſſary to entruſt him anew with the government of Mercia. This conduct of the court, which, in all its circumſtances, is ſo barbarous, weak, and imprudent, both merited and prognoſticated the moſt grievous calamities.

953. THE northern invaders, now well acquainted with the defenceleſs condition of England, made a powerful deſcent under the command of Sweyn, king of Denmark, and Olave, king of Norway; and ſailing up the Humber, ſpread on all ſides their deſtructive ravages. Lindeſey

[b] Chron. Sax. p. 127. W. Malm. p. 62. Higden, p. 270.
[c] Chron. Sax. p. 128. W. Malm. p. 62.

was

was laid waſte; Banbury was deſtroyed; and all the Northumbrians, though moſtly of Daniſh deſcent, were conſtrained either to join the invaders, or to ſuffer under their depredations. A powerful army was aſſembled to oppoſe the Danes, and a general action enſued; but the Engliſh were abandoned in the battle, by the cowardice or treachery of their three leaders, all of them men of Daniſh race, Frena, Frithegiſt, and Godwin, who gave the example of a ſhameful flight to the troops under their command. CHAP. I.

ENCOURAGED by this ſucceſs, and ſtill more by the contempt which it inſpired for their enemy, the pirates ventured to attack the center of the kingdom; and entering the Thames in ninety-four veſſels, laid ſiege to London, and threatened it with total deſtruction. But the citizens, alarmed at the danger, and firmly united among themſelves, made a bolder defence than the cowardice of the nobility and gentry gave the invaders reaſon to apprehend; and the beſiegers, after ſuffering the greateſt hardſhips, were finally fruſtrated in their attempt. In order to revenge themſelves, they laid waſte Eſſex, Suſſex, and Hampſhire; and having there procured horſes, they were thereby enabled to ſpread, through the more inland counties, the fury of their depredations. In this extremity, Ethelred and his nobles had recourſe to the former expedient; and ſending ambaſſadors to the two northern kings, they promiſed them ſubſiſtence and tribute, on condition they would, for the preſent, put an end to their ravages, and ſoon after depart the kingdom. Sweyn and Olave agreed to the terms, and peaceably took up their quarters at Southampton, where the ſum of ſixteen thouſand pounds was paid to them. Olave even made a journey to Andover, where Ethelred reſided; and he received the rite of confirmation from the Engliſh biſhops, as well as many rich preſents from the king. He here promiſed, that he would never more infeſt the

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Engliſh territories; and he faithfully fulfilled that engagement. This prince receives the appellation of St. Olave from the church of Rome; and notwithſtanding the general preſumption, which lies, either againſt the underſtanding or morals of every one, who in thoſe ignorant ages was dignified with that title, he ſeems to have been a man of merit and of virtue. Sweyn, though leſs ſcrupulous than Olave, was conſtrained, upon the departure of the Norwegian prince, to evacuate alſo the kingdom with all his followers.

957. This compoſition brought only a ſhort interval to the miſeries of the Engliſh. The Daniſh pirates appeared ſoon after in the Severne; and having committed ſpoil in Wales, as well as in Cornwall and Devon, they ſailed round to the ſouth-coaſt, and entering the Tamar, completed the devaſtation of theſe two counties. They then returned to the Briſtol-channel; and penetrating into the country by the Avon, ſpread themſelves over all that neighbourhood, and carried fire and ſword even into Dor-
998. ſetſhire. They next changed the ſeat of war; and after ravaging the Iſle of Wight, they entered the Thames and Medway, and laid ſiege to Rocheſter, where they defeated the Kentiſh-men in a pitched battle. After this victory the whole province of Kent was made a ſcene of ſlaughter, fire, and devaſtation. The extremity of theſe miſeries forced the Engliſh into counſels for common defence both by ſea and land; but the weakneſs of the king, the diviſions among the nobility, the treachery of ſome, the cowardice of others, the want of concert in all, fruſtrated every endeavour: Their fleets and armies either came too late to attack the enemy, or were repulſed with diſhonour; and the people were thus equally ruined by reſiſtance or by ſubmiſſion. The Engliſh, therefore, deſtitute both of prudence and unanimity in council, of courage and conduct in the field, had recourſe to the ſame weak expedient, which by experience they had already

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already found so ineffectual: They offered the Danes to buy peace by paying them a large sum of money. These ravagers rose continually in their demands; and now required the payment of 24,000 pounds, to which the English were so mean and imprudent as to submit [a]. The departure of the Danes procured them another short interval of repose, which they enjoyed as if it were to be perpetual, without making any effectual preparations for a more vigorous resistance upon the next return of the enemy.

Besides receiving this sum, the Danes were engaged by another motive to depart a kingdom, which appeared so little in a situation to resist their efforts: They were invited over by their countrymen in Normandy, who at this time were hard pressed by the arms of Robert, king of France, and who found it difficult to defend the settlement, which, with so much advantage to themselves and glory to their nation, they had made in that country. It is probable, also, that Ethelred, observing the close connexions thus maintained among all the Danes, however divided in government or situation, was desirous of forming an alliance with that formidable people: For this purpose, being now a widower, he made his addresses to Emma, sister to Richard II. duke of Normandy, and he soon succeeded in his negociation. The princess came over this year to England, and was married to Ethelred [b]. 1001.

In the end of the ninth and beginning of the tenth century; when the north, not yet exhausted by that multitude of people or rather nations, which she had successively emitted, sent forth a new race, not of conquerors, as before, but of pirates and ravagers, who infested the countries possessed by her once warlike sons; lived Rollo, a petty prince or chieftain in Denmark, whose Settlement of the Normans.

[a] Hoveden, p. 429. Chron. Mailr. p. 153. Higden, p. 271. [b] H. Hunt. p. 359.

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valour and abilities soon engaged the attention of his countrymen. He was exposed in his youth to the jealousy of the king of Denmark, who attacked his small, but independant principality; and who, being foiled in every assault, had recourse at last to perfidy for effectuating his purpose, which he had so often attempted in vain by force of arms [c]: He lulled Rollo into security by an insidious peace; and falling suddenly upon him, murdered his brother and his bravest officers, and forced him to fly for safety into Scandinavia. Here many of his ancient subjects, induced partly by affection to their prince, partly by the oppressions of the Danish monarch, ranged themselves under his standard, and offered to follow him in every enterprize. Rollo, instead of attempting to recover his paternal dominions, where he must expect a vigorous resistance from the Danes, determined to pursue an easier, but more important undertaking, and to make his fortune, in imitation of his countrymen, by pillaging the richer and more southern coasts of Europe. He collected a body of troops, which, like that of all those ravagers, was composed of Norwegians, Swedes, Frisians, Danes, and adventurers of all nations, who, being accustomed to a roving, unsettled life, took delight in nothing but war and plunder. His reputation brought him associates from all quarters; and a vision, which he pretended to have appeared to him in his sleep, and which, according to his interpretation of it, prognosticated the greatest successes, proved also a powerful incentive with those ignorant and superstitious people [d].

The first attempt, made by Rollo, was on England, near the end of Alfred's reign; when that great monarch, having settled Guthrun and his followers in East-Anglia, and others of those free-booters in Northumberland, and

[c] Dudo ex edit. Duchesne. p. 70, 71. Gul. Gemeticensis, lib. 2. cap. 2, 3.
[d] Dudo, p. 71. Gul. Gem. in epist. ad Gul. Conq.

having

having reſtored peace to his haraſſed country, had eſta- CHAP. III.
bliſhed the moſt excellent military as well as civil inſti-
tutions among the Engliſh. The prudent Dane, finding that no advantages could be gained over ſuch a people, governed by ſuch a prince, ſoon turned his enterprizes againſt France, which he found more expoſed to his inroads [e]; and during the reigns of Eudes, an uſurper, and of Charles the Simple, a weak prince, he committed the moſt deſtructive ravages both on the inland and maritime provinces of that kingdom. The French, having no means of defence againſt a leader, who united all the valour of his countrymen with the policy of more civilized nations, were obliged to ſubmit to the expedient practiſed by Alfred, and to offer the invaders a ſettlement in ſome of thoſe provinces, which they had depopulated by their arms [f].

THE reaſon why the Danes for many years purſued meaſures ſo different from theſe which had been embraced by the Goths, Vandals, Franks, Burgundians, Lombards, and other northern conquerors, was the great difference, in the method of attack, which was practiſed by theſe ſeveral nations, and to which the nature of their reſpective ſituations neceſſarily confined them. The latter tribes, living in an inland country, made incurſions by land upon the Roman empire; and when they entered far into the frontiers, they were obliged to carry along with them their wives and families, whom they had no hopes of ſoon re-viſiting, and who could not otherwiſe participate of their plunder. This circumſtance quickly made them think of forcing a ſettlement in the provinces, which they had over-run; and theſe barbarians, ſpreading themſelves over the country, found an intereſt in protecting the property and induſtry of the people, whom they had ſubdued. But the Danes and Norwegians, in-

[e] Gul. Gemet. lib. 2. cap. 6. [f] Dudo, p. 82.

vited

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vited by their maritime ſituation, and obliged to maintain themſelves in their uncultivated country by fiſhing, had acquired ſome experience of navigation; and in their military excurſions purſued the method practiſed againſt the Roman empire by the more early Saxons: They made deſcents in ſmall bodies from their ſhips or rather boats, and ravaging the coaſts, returned with the booty to their families, whom they could not conveniently carry along with them in thoſe hazardous enterprizes. But when they encreaſed their armaments, made incurſions into the inland countries, and found it ſafe to remain longer in the midſt of the enfeebled enemy, they had been accuſtomed to crowd their veſſels with their wives and children, and having no longer any temptation to return into their own country, they willingly embraced an opportunity of ſettling in the warm climates and cultivated fields of the ſouth.

Affairs were in this ſituation with Rollo and his followers, when Charles propoſed to relinquiſh to them the province formerly called Neuſtria, and to purchaſe peace on theſe hard conditions. After all the terms were fully ſettled, there appeared only one circumſtance ſhocking to the haughty Dane: He was required to do homage to Charles for this province, and to put himſelf in that humiliating poſture, impoſed on vaſſals by the rites of the feudal law. He long refuſed to ſubmit to this indignity; but being unwilling to loſe ſuch important advantages for a mere ceremony, he made a ſacrifice of his pride to his intereſt, and acknowledged himſelf in form the vaſſal of the French monarch [g]. Charles gave him his daughter, Giſla, in marriage; and that he might bind him faſter to his intereſts, made him a donation of a conſiderable territory, beſides that which he was obliged to ſurrender to him by his ſtipulations. When ſome of the French nobles informed him, that, in return for ſo generous a

[g] Ypod. Neuſt. p. 417.

preſent,

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preſent, it was expected, that he ſhould throw himſelf at the king's feet, and make ſuitable acknowledgments for his bounty; Rollo replied, that he would rather break off the treaty; and it was with ſome difficulty they could perſuade him to make that compliment by one of his captains. The Dane, commiſſioned for this purpoſe, full of indignation at the order, and deſpiſing ſo unwarlike a prince, caught Charles by the foot, and pretending to carry it to his mouth, that he might kiſs it, overthrew him before all his courtiers. The French nation, ſenſible of their preſent weakneſs, found it prudent to overlook this inſult [h].

Rollo, who was now in the decline of life, and was tired of wars and depredations, applied himſelf, with mature counſels, to the ſettlement of his new-acquired territory, which was thenceforth called Normandy; and he parcelled it out among his captains and followers. He followed in this partition the cuſtoms of the feudal law, which was then univerſally eſtabliſhed in the ſouthern countries of Europe, and which ſuited the peculiar circumſtances of that age. He treated the French ſubjects who ſubmitted to him, with mildneſs and juſtice; he reclaimed his ancient followers from their ferocity and violence; he eſtabliſhed law and order throughout his ſtate; and after a life ſpent in tumults and ravages, he died peaceably in a good old age, and left his dominions to his poſterity [i].

William I. who ſucceeded him, governed the dutchy for twenty-five years; and during this time, the Normans were thoroughly intermingled with the French, had acquired their language, had imitated their manners, and had made ſuch progreſs towards cultivation, that, on the death of William, his ſon, Richard, though a minor [k], inherited his dominions: A ſure proof, that the Nor-

[h] Gul. Gemet. lib. 2. cap. 17. [i] Gul. Gemet. lib. 2. cap. 19, 20, 21. [k] Order. Vitalis, p. 459. Gul. Gemet. lib. 4. cap. 1.

mans

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mans were already somewhat advanced in civility, and that their government could now rest secure on its laws and civil institutions, and was not wholly sustained by the abilities of the sovereign. Richard, after a long reign of fifty-four years, was succeeded by his son of the same name in the year 996 [l]; which was eighty-five years after the first establishment of the Normans in France. This was the duke, who gave his sister, Emma, in marriage to Ethelred, king of England, and who thereby formed connections with a country, which his posterity was so soon after destined to subdue.

The Danes had been established during a longer period in England than in France; and though the similarity of their original language to that of the Saxons invited them to a more early coalition with the natives, they had hitherto found so little example of civilized manners among the English, that they retained all their ancient ferocity, and valued themselves only on their national character of military bravery. The recent, as well as more ancient atchievements of their countrymen, tended to support this idea; and the English princes, particularly Athelstan and Edgar, sensible of that superiority, had been accustomed to keep in pay bodies of Danish troops, who were quartered about the country, and committed many violences upon the inhabitants. These mercenaries had attained to such a height of luxury, according to the old English writers [m], that they combed their hair once a day, bathed themselves once a week, changed their cloaths frequently; and by all these arts of effeminacy, as well as by their military character, had rendered themselves so agreeable to the fair sex, that they debauched the wives and daughters of the English, and dishonoured many families. But what most provoked the inhabitants, was, that, instead of defending them against invaders, they were ever ready to betray them to

[l] Order. Vitalis, p. 459. [m] Wallingford, p. 547.

the

the foreign Danes, and to aſſociate themſelves with all ſtraggling parties of that nation. The animoſity, between the inhabitants of Engliſh and Daniſh race, had, from theſe repeated injuries, riſen to a great height; when Ethelred, from a policy incident to weak princes, embraced the cruel reſolution of maſſacring the latter throughout all his dominions *. Secret orders were diſpatched to commence the execution every where on the ſame day; and the feſtival of St. Brice, which fell on a Sunday, the day on which the Danes uſually bathed themſelves, was choſen for that purpoſe. It is needleſs to repeat the accounts tranſmitted concerning the barbarity of this maſſacre: The rage of the populace, excited by ſo many injuries, ſanctified by authority, and ſtimulated by example, diſtinguiſhed not between innocence and guilt, ſpared neither ſex nor age, and was not ſatiated without the tortures, as well as death, of the unhappy victims. Even Gunilda, ſiſter to the king of Denmark, who had married Earl Paling, and had embraced Chriſtianity, was, by the advice of Edric, earl of Wilts, ſeized and condemned to death by Ethelred, after ſeeing her huſband and children butchered before her face. This unhappy princeſs foretold, in the agonies of deſpair, that her murder would ſoon be avenged by the total ruin of the Engliſh nation.

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1002.

Nov. 13.

Never was prophecy better fulfilled; and never did barbarous policy prove more fatal to the authors. Sweyn and his Danes, who wanted but a pretence for invading the Engliſh, appeared off the weſtern coaſt, and threatened to take full revenge for the ſlaughter of their countrymen. Exeter fell firſt into their hands, from the negligence or treachery of earl Hugh, a Norman, who had been made governor by the intereſt of Queen Emma. They began to ſpread their devaſtations over the country;

1003.

* See note [D] at the end of the volume.

when

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when the Engliſh, ſenſible what outrages they muſt now expect from their barbarous and offended enemy, aſſembled more early and in greater numbers than uſual, and made an appearance of vigorous reſiſtance. But all theſe preparations were fruſtrated by the treachery of duke Alfric, who was intruſted with the command, and who, feigning ſickneſs, refuſed to lead the army againſt the Danes, till it was diſpirited, and at laſt diſſipated, by his fatal miſconduct. Alfric ſoon after died; and Edric, a greater traitor than he, who had married the king's daughter, and had acquired a total aſcendant over him, ſucceeded Alfric in the government of Mercia, and in the command of the Engliſh armies. A great famine, proceeding partly from the bad ſeaſons, partly from the decay of agriculture, added to all the other miſeries of the inhabitants. The country, waſted by the Danes, haraſſed by the fruitleſs expeditions of its own forces, was reduced to the utmoſt deſolation; and at laſt ſubmitted to the infamy of purchaſing a precarious peace from the enemy, by the payment of 30,000 pounds.

1007.

The Engliſh endeavoured to employ this interval in making preparations againſt the return of the Danes, which they had reaſon ſoon to expect. A law was made, ordering the proprietors of eight hydes of land to provide each a horſeman and a complete ſuit of armour; and thoſe of 310 hydes to equip a ſhip for the defence of the coaſt. When this navy was aſſembled, which muſt have conſiſted of near eight hundred veſſels [n], all hopes of its ſucceſs were diſappointed by the factions, animoſities, and diſſentions of the nobility. Edric had impelled his brother Brightric to prefer an accuſation of treaſon againſt Wolfnoth, governor of Suſſex, the father of the famous earl Godwin; and that nobleman, well acquainted with the malevolence as well as power of his enemy, found no

[n] There were 243,600 hydes in England. Conſequently the ſhips equipped muſt be 785. The cavalry was 30,450 men.

means

means of safety but in deserting with twenty ships to the Danes. Brightric pursued him with a fleet of eighty sail; but his ships being shattered in a tempest, and stranded on the coast, he was suddenly attacked by Wolfnoth, and all his vessels burnt and destroyed. The imbecility of the king was little capable of repairing this misfortune: The treachery of Edric frustrated every plan for future defence: And the English navy, disconcerted, discouraged, and divided, was at last scattered into its several harbours. CHAP. III.

It is almost impossible, or would be tedious, to relate particularly all the miseries to which the English were thenceforth exposed. We hear of nothing but the sacking and burning of towns; the devastations of the open country; the appearance of the enemy in every quarter of the kingdom; their cruel diligence in discovering any corner, which had not been ransacked by their former violence. The broken and disjointed narration of the antient historians is here well adapted to the nature of the war, which was conducted by such sudden inroads, as would have been dangerous even to an united and well governed kingdom, but proved fatal, where nothing but a general consternation, and mutual diffidence and dissention prevailed. The governors of one province refused to march to the assistance of another, and were at last terrified from assembling their forces for the defence of their own province. General councils were summoned; but either no resolution was taken, or none was carried into execution. And the only expedient, in which the English agreed, was the base and imprudent one, of buying anew a peace from the Danes by the payment of 48,000 pounds.

This measure did not bring them even that short interval of repose, which they had expected from it. The Danes, disregarding all engagements, continued their devastations 1011.

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vaſtations and hoſtilities; levied a new contribution of 8000 pounds upon the county of Kent alone; murdered the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who had refuſed to countenance this exaction; and the Engliſh nobility found no other reſource than that of ſubmitting every where to the Daniſh monarch, ſwearing allegiance to him, and delivering him hoſtages for their good behaviour.

1013. Ethelred, equally afraid of the violence of the enemy, and the treachery of his own ſubjects, fled into Normandy, whither he had ſent before him Queen Emma, and her two ſons, Alfred and Edward. Richard received his unhappy gueſts with a generoſity that does honour to his memory.

1014. THE king had not been above ſix weeks in Normandy, when he heard of the death of Sweyn, who expired at Gainſborough, before he had time to eſtabliſh himſelf in his new-acquired dominions. The Engliſh prelates and nobility, taking advantage of this event, ſent over a deputation to Normandy; inviting Ethelred to return to them, expreſſing a deſire of being governed again by their native prince, and intimating their hopes, that, being now tutored by experience, he would avoid all thoſe errors, which had been attended with ſuch misfortunes to himſelf and to his people. But the miſconduct of Ethelred was incurable; and on his reſuming the government, he diſcovered the ſame incapacity, indolence, cowardice, and credulity, which had ſo often expoſed him to the inſults of his enemies. His ſon-in-law, Edric, notwithſtanding his repeated treaſons, retained ſuch influence at court, as to inſtil into the king jealouſies of Sigefert and Morcar, two of the chief nobles of Mercia: Edric allured them into his houſe, where he murdered them; while Ethelred participated in the infamy of this action, by confiſcating their eſtates, and thruſting into a convent the widow of Sigefert. She was a woman of ſin-

gular beauty and merit; and in a visit which was paid her, during her confinement, by prince Edmond, the king's eldest son, she inspired him with so violent an affection, that he released her from the convent, and soon after married her, without the consent of his father.

MEAN while the English found in Canute, the son and successor of Sweyn, an enemy no less terrible than the prince, from whom death had so lately delivered them. He ravaged the eastern coast with merciless fury, and put ashore all the English hostages at Sandwich, after having cut off their hands and noses. He was obliged, by the necessity of his affairs, to make a voyage to Denmark; but returning soon after, he continued his depredations along the southern coast: He even broke into the counties of Dorset, Wilts, and Somerset; where an army was assembled against him, under the command of prince Edmond and duke Edric. The latter still continued his perfidious machinations: After endeavouring in vain to get the prince into his power, he found means 1015
to disperse the army; and he then openly deserted to Canute with forty vessels.

NOTWITHSTANDING this misfortune, Edmond was not disconcerted; but assembling together all the force of England, was in a condition to give the enemy battle. The king had had such frequent experience of perfidy among his subjects, that he had lost all confidence in them: He remained at London, pretending sickness, but really from apprehensions, that they intended to buy their peace, by delivering him into the hands of his enemies. The army called aloud for their sovereign to march at their head against the Danes; and on his refusal to take the field, they were so discouraged, that those vast preparations became ineffectual for the defence of the kingdom. Edmond, deprived of all regular supplies to maintain his soldiers, was obliged to commit

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equal ravages with thoſe which were practiſed by the Danes; and after making ſome fruitleſs expeditions into the north, which had ſubmitted entirely to Canute's power, he retired to London, determined there to maintain to the laſt extremity the ſmall remains of Engliſh liberty. He there found every thing in confuſion by the death of the king, 1016. who expired after an unhappy and inglorious reign of thirty-five years. He left two ſons by his firſt marriage, Edmond, who ſucceeded him, and Edwy, whom Canute afterwards murdered. His two ſons by the ſecond marriage, Alfred and Edward, were, immediately upon Ethelred's death, conveyed into Normandy by Queen Emma.

EDMOND Ironſide.

THIS prince, who received the name of Ironſide from his hardy valour, poſſeſſed courage and abilities, ſufficient to have ſaved his country from ſinking into thoſe calamities, but not to raiſe it from that abyſs of miſery, into which it had already fallen. Among the other misfortunes of the Engliſh, treachery and diſaffection had creeped in among the nobility and prelates; and Edmond found no better expedient for preventing the farther progreſs of theſe fatal evils, than to lead his army inſtantly into the field, and to employ them againſt the common enemy. After meeting with ſome ſucceſs at Gillingham, he prepared himſelf to decide in one general engagement the fate of his crown: At Scoerſton, in the county of Gloceſter, he offered battle to the enemy, who were commanded by Canute and Edric. Fortune in the beginning of the day declared for him; but Edric, having cut off the head of one Oſmer, whoſe countenance reſembled that of Edmond, fixed it on a ſpear, carried it through the ranks in triumph, and called aloud to the Engliſh, that it was time to fly; for behold!

the head of their ſovereign. And though Edmond, obſerving the conſternation of the troops, took off his helmet and ſhowed himſelf to them, the utmoſt he could gain by his activity and valour was to leave the victory undecided. Edric now took a ſurer method to ruin him, by pretending to deſert to him; and as Edmond was well acquainted with his power, and probably knew no other of the chief nobility in whom he could repoſe more confidence, he was obliged, notwithſtanding the repeated perfidy of the man, to give him a conſiderable command in the army. A battle ſoon after enſued at Aſſington in Eſſex; where Edric, flying in the beginning of the day, occaſioned the total defeat of the Engliſh, followed by a great ſlaughter of the nobility. The indefatigable Edmond, however, had ſtill reſources: Aſſembling a new army at Gloceſter, he was again in a condition to diſpute the field; when the Daniſh and Engliſh nobility, equally haraſſed with thoſe convulſions, obliged their kings to come to a compromiſe, and to divide the kingdom between them by treaty. Canute reſerved to himſelf the northern diviſion of Mercia, Eaſt-Anglia, and Northumberland, which he had entirely ſubdued: The ſouthern parts were left to Edmond. This prince ſurvived the treaty about a month: He was murdered at Oxford by two of his chamberlains, accomplices of Edric, who thereby made way for the ſucceſſion of Canute the Dane to the crown of England.

CHAP. III.

CANUTE.

THE Engliſh, who had been unable to defend their country, and maintain their independency, under ſo active and brave a prince as Edmond, could, after his death, expect nothing but total ſubjection from Canute, who, active and brave himſelf, and at the head of a great 1017.

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force, was ready to take advantage of the minority of Edwin and Edward, the two ſons of Edmond. Yet this conqueror, who was commonly ſo little ſcrupulous, ſhowed himſelf anxious to cover his injuſtice under plauſible pretences: Before he ſeized the dominions of the Engliſh princes, he ſummoned a general aſſembly of the ſtates of England, in order to fix the ſucceſſion of the kingdom. He here ſuborned ſome nobles to depoſe, that, in the treaty of Gloceſter, it had been verbally agreed, either to name Canute, in caſe of Edmond's death, ſucceſſor in his dominions, or tutor to his children (for hiſtorians vary in this particular): And that evidence, ſupported by the great power of Canute, determined the ſtates immediately to put the Daniſh monarch in poſſeſſion of the government. Canute, jealous of the two princes, but ſenſible that he ſhould render himſelf extremely odious, if he ordered them to be diſpatched in England, ſent them abroad to his ally, the king of Sweden, whom he deſired, as ſoon as they arrived at his court, to free him, by their death, from all farther anxiety. The Swediſh monarch was too generous to comply with this requeſt; but being afraid of drawing on himſelf a quarrel with Canute, by protecting the young princes, he ſent them to Solomon, king of Hungary, to be educated in his court. The elder, Edwin, was afterwards married to the ſiſter of the king of Hungary; but the Engliſh prince dying without iſſue, Solomon gave his ſiſter-in-law, Agatha, daughter of the emperor Henry II. in marriage to Edward, the younger brother; and ſhe bore him Edgar Atheling, Margaret, afterwards queen of Scotland, and Chriſtina, who retired into a convent.

CANUTE, though he had reached the great point of his ambition, in obtaining poſſeſſion of the Engliſh crown, was obliged at firſt to make great ſacrifices to it; and to gratify the chief of the nobility, by beſtowing on them the moſt

most extensive governments and jurisdictions. He created Thurkill earl or duke of East-Anglia, (for these titles were then nearly of the same import) Yric of Northumberland, and Edric of Mercia; reserving only to himself the administration of Wessex. But seizing afterwards a favourable opportunity, he expelled Thurkill and Yric from their governments, and banished them the kingdom: He put to death many of the English nobility, on whose fidelity he could not rely, and whom he hated on account of their disloyalty to their native prince. And even the traitor, Edric, having had the assurance to reproach him with his services, was condemned to be executed, and his body to be thrown into the Thames; a suitable reward for his multiplied acts of perfidy and rebellion. CHAP. III.

CANUTE also found himself obliged, in the beginning of his reign, to load the people with heavy taxes, in order to reward his Danish followers: He exacted from them at one time the sum of 72,000 pounds; besides 11,000 pounds, which he levied on London alone. He was probably willing, from political motives, to mulct severely that city, on account of the affection which it had borne to Edmond, and the resistance which it had made to the Danish power in two obstinate sieges [o]. But these rigors were imputed to necessity; and Canute, like a wise prince, was determined, that the English, now deprived of all their dangerous leaders, should be reconciled to the Danish yoke, by the justice and impartiality of his administration. He sent back to Denmark as many of his followers as he could safely spare: He restored the Saxon customs in a general assembly of the states of the kingdom: He made no distinction between Danes and English in the distribution of justice: And he took care, by a strict execution of law, to protect the lives and properties of all his people. The Danes were gradually incorporated with

[o] W. Malm. p. 72. In one of these sieges, Canute diverted the course of the Thames, and by that means brought his ships above London-bridge.

CHAP. III.

his new ſubjects; and both were glad to obtain a little reſpite from thoſe multiplied calamities, from which the one, no leſs than the other, had, in their fierce conteſt for power, experienced ſuch fatal conſequences.

THE removal of Edmond's children into ſo diſtant a country as Hungary, was, next to their death, regarded by Canute as the greateſt ſecurity to his government: He had no farther anxiety, except with regard to Alfred and Edward, who were protected and ſupported by their uncle, Richard, duke of Normandy. Richard even fitted out a great armament, in order to reſtore the Engliſh princes to the throne of their anceſtors; and though the navy was diſperſed by a ſtorm, Canute ſaw the danger to which he was expoſed, from the enmity of ſo warlike a people as the Normans. In order to acquire the friendſhip of the duke, he paid his addreſſes to queen Emma, the ſiſter of that prince; and promiſed, that he would leave the children, whom he ſhould have by that marriage, in poſſeſſion of the crown of England. Richard complied with his demand, and ſent over Emma to England, where ſhe was ſoon after married to Canute [p]. The Engliſh, though they diſapproved of her eſpouſing the mortal enemy of her former huſband and his family, were pleaſed to find at court a ſovereign, to whom they were accuſtomed, and who had already formed connections with them: And thus Canute, beſides ſecuring, by this marriage, the alliance of Normandy, gradually acquired, by the ſame means, the confidence of his own ſubjects [q]. The Norman prince did not long ſurvive the marriage of Emma; and he left the inheritance of the dutchy to his eldeſt ſon of the ſame name; who, dying a year after him without children, was ſucceeded by his brother Robert, a man of valour and ability.

[p] Chron. Sax. p. 151. W. Malmeſ. p. 73. [q] W. Malmeſ. p. 73. Higden, p. 275.

CANUTE,

CANUTE, having settled his power in England beyond all danger of a revolution, made a voyage to Denmark, in order to resist the attacks of the king of Sweden; and he carried along with him a great body of the English, under the command of earl Godwin. This nobleman had here an opportunity of performing a service, by which he both reconciled the king's mind to the English nation, and gaining to himself the friendship of his sovereign, laid the foundation of that immense fortune which he acquired to his family. He was stationed next the Swedish camp; and observing a favourable opportunity, which he was obliged suddenly to seize, he attacked the enemy in the night, drove them from their trenches, threw them into disorder, pursued his advantage, and obtained a decisive victory over them. Next morning, Canute, seeing the English camp entirely abandoned, imagined that these disaffected troops had deserted to the enemy: He was agreeably surprised to find, that they were at that time engaged in pursuit of the discomfited Swedes. He was so pleased with this success, and with the manner of obtaining it, that he bestowed his daughter in marriage upon Godwin, and treated him ever after with entire confidence and regard. CHAP. III.

IN another voyage, which he made afterwards to Denmark, Canute attacked Norway, and expelling the just, but unwarlike Olaus, kept possession of his kingdom, till the death of that prince. He had now by his conquests and valour attained the utmost height of grandeur: Having leisure from wars and intrigues, he felt the unsatisfactory nature of all human enjoyments; and equally weary of the glories and turmoils of this life, he began to cast his view towards that future existence, which it is so natural for the human mind, whether satiated by prosperity or disgusted with adversity, to make the object of its 1028.

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attention. Unfortunately, the ſpirit which prevailed in that age gave a wrong direction to his devotion: Inſtead of making compenſation to thoſe whom he had injured by his former acts of violence, he employed himſelf entirely in thoſe exerciſes of piety, which the monks repreſented as the moſt meritorious. He built churches, he endowed monaſteries, he enriched the eccleſiaſtics, and he beſtowed revenues for the ſupport of chantries at Aſſington and other places; where he appointed prayers to be ſaid for the ſouls of thoſe who had there fallen in battle againſt him. He even undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, where he reſided a conſiderable time: Beſides obtaining from the pope ſome privileges for the Engliſh ſchool erected there, he engaged all the princes, through whoſe dominions he was obliged to paſs, to deſiſt from thoſe heavy impoſitions and tolls, which they were accuſtomed to exact from the Engliſh pilgrims. By this ſpirit of devotion, no leſs than by his equitable and politic adminiſtration, he gained, in a good meaſure, the affections of his ſubjects.

CANUTE, the greateſt and moſt powerful monarch of his time, ſovereign of Denmark and Norway, as well as of England, could not fail of meeting with adulation from his courtiers; a tribute which is liberally paid even to the meaneſt and weakeſt princes. Some of his flatterers breaking out, one day, in admiration of his grandeur, exclaimed that every thing was poſſible for him: Upon which the monarch, it is ſaid, ordered his chair to be ſet on the ſea-ſhore, while the tide was riſing; and as the waters approached, he commanded them to retire, and to obey the voice of him who was lord of the ocean. He feigned to ſit ſome time in expectation of their ſubmiſſion; but when the ſea ſtill advanced towards him, and began to waſh him with its billows, he turned to his courtiers, and remarked to them, that every creature in the univerſe

was

was feeble and impotent, and that power reſided with one Being alone, in whoſe hands were all the elements of nature; who could ſay to the ocean, *Thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther*; and who could level with his nod the moſt towering piles of human pride and ambition. CHAP. III.

THE only memorable action, which Canute performed after his return from Rome, was an expedition againſt Malcolm, king of Scotland. During the reign of Ethelred, a tax of a ſhilling a hyde had been impoſed on all the lands of England. It was commonly called *Danegelt*; becauſe the revenue had been employed, either in buying peace with the Danes, or in making preparations againſt the inroads of that hoſtile nation. That prince had required, that the ſame tax ſhould be paid by Cumberland, which was held by the Scots; but Malcolm, a warlike prince, told him, that, as he was always able to repulſe the Danes by his own power, he would neither ſubmit to buy peace of his enemies, nor pay others for reſiſting them. Ethelred, offended at this reply, which contained a ſecret reproach on his own conduct, undertook an expedition againſt Cumberland; but though he committed ravages upon the country, he could never bring Malcolm to a temper more humble or ſubmiſſive. Canute, after his acceſſion, ſummoned the Scottiſh king to acknowledge himſelf a vaſſal for Cumberland to the crown of England; but Malcolm refuſed compliance, on pretence that he owed homage to thoſe princes only, who inherited that kingdom by right of blood. Canute was not of a temper to bear this inſult; and the king of Scotland ſoon found, that the ſceptre was in very different hands from thoſe of the feeble and irreſolute Ethelred. Upon Canute's appearing on the frontiers with a formidable army, Malcolm agreed, that his grandſon and heir, Duncan, whom he put in poſſeſſion of Cumberland, ſhould make the ſubmiſſions required, and that the heirs of Scotland ſhould 1031.

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ſhould always acknowledge themſelves vaſſals to England for that province [r].

CANUTE paſſed four years in peace after this enterprize, and he died at Shaftſbury [s]; leaving three ſons, Sweyn, Harold, and Hardicanute. Sweyn, whom he had by his firſt marriage with Alfwen, daughter of the earl of Hampſhire, was crowned in Norway: Hardicanute, whom Emma had born him, was in poſſeſſion of Denmark: Harold, who was of the ſame marriage with Sweyn, was at that time in England.

HAROLD HAREFOOT.

1035. THOUGH Canute, in his treaty with Richard, duke of Normandy, had ſtipulated, that his children by Emma ſhould ſucceed to the crown of England, he had either conſidered himſelf as releaſed from that engagement by the death of Richard, or eſteemed it dangerous to leave an unſettled and newly-conquered kingdom in the hands of ſo young a prince as Hardicanute: He therefore appointed, by his will, Harold ſucceſſor to the crown. This prince was beſides preſent, to maintain his claim; he was favoured by all the Danes; and he got immediately poſſeſſion of his father's treaſures, which might be equally uſeful, whether he found it neceſſary to proceed by force or intrigue, in inſuring his ſucceſſion. On the other hand, Hardicanute had the ſuffrages of the Engliſh, who, on account of his being born among them of queen Emma, regarded him as their countryman; he was favoured by the articles of treaty with the duke of Normandy; and above all, his party was eſpouſed by earl Godwin, the moſt powerful nobleman in the kingdom, eſpecially in the province of Weſſex, the chief ſeat of the ancient Engliſh. Affairs were likely to terminate in a civil war; when, by the interpoſition of the nobility of both parties,

[r] W. Malm. p. 74. [s] Chron. Sax. p. 154. W. Malm. p. 76.

a com-

a compromiſe was made; and it was agreed, that Harold ſhould enjoy, together with London, all the provinces north of the Thames, while the poſſeſſion of the ſouth ſhould remain to Hardicanute: And till that prince ſhould appear and take poſſeſſion of his dominions, Emma fixed her reſidence at Wincheſter, and eſtabliſhed her authority over her ſon's ſhare of the partition. CHAP. III.

MEANWHILE, Robert, duke of Normandy, died in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and being ſucceeded by a ſon, yet a minor, the two Engliſh princes, Alfred and Edward, who found no longer any countenance or protection in that country, gladly embraced the opportunity of paying a viſit, with a numerous retinue, to their mother Emma, who ſeemed to be placed in a ſtate of ſo much power and ſplendor at Wincheſter. But the face of affairs ſoon wore a melancholy aſpect. Earl Godwin had been gained by the arts of Harold, who promiſed to eſpouſe the daughter of that nobleman; and while the treaty was yet a ſecret, theſe two tyrants laid a plan for the deſtruction of the Engliſh princes. Alfred was invited to London by Harold with many profeſſions of friendſhip; but when he had reached Guilford, he was ſet upon by Godwin's vaſſals, about ſix hundred of his train were murdered in the moſt cruel manner, he himſelf was taken priſoner, his eyes were put out, and he was conducted to the monaſtery of Ely, where he died ſoon after [t]. Edward and Emma, apprized of the fate, which was awaiting them, fled beyond ſea, the former into Normandy, the latter into Flanders. While Harold, triumphing in his bloody policy, took poſſeſſion, without reſiſtance, of all the dominions aſſigned to his brother.

[t] H. Hunt. p. 365. Ypod. Neuſtr. p. 434. Hoveden, p. 438. Chron. Mailr. p. 156. Higden, p. 277. Chron. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 39. Sim. Dun. p. 179. Abbas Rieval. p. 366, 374. Brompton, p. 935. Gul. Gem. lib. 7. cap. 11. Math. Weſt. p. 209. Flor. Wigorn. p. 622. Alur. Beverl. p. 118.

THIS

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THIS is the only memorable action, performed, during a reign of four years, by this prince, who gave so bad a specimen of his character, and whose bodily accomplishments alone are known to us, by his appellation of *Harefoot*, which he acquired from his agility in running and walking. He died the 14th of April, 1039; very little regretted or esteemed by his subjects; and left the succession open to his brother, Hardicanute.

HARDICANUTE.

1039. HARDICANUTE, or Canute the Hardy, that is, the robust (for he too is chiefly known by his bodily accomplishments) though, by remaining so long in Denmark, he had been deprived of his share in the partition of the kingdom, had not abandoned his pretensions; and he had determined, before Harold's death, to recover by arms, what he had lost, either by his own negligence, or by the necessity of his affairs. On pretence of paying a visit to the queen dowager in Flanders, he had assembled a fleet of sixty sail, and was preparing to make a descent on England, when intelligence of his brother's death induced him to sail immediately to London, where he was received in triumph, and acknowledged king without opposition.

THE first act of Hardicanute's government afforded his subjects a bad prognostic of his future conduct. He was so enraged at Harold, for depriving him of his share of the kingdom, and for the cruel treatment of his brother Alfred, that, in an impotent desire of revenge against the dead, he ordered his body to be dug up, and to be thrown into the Thames: And when it was found by some fishermen, and buried in London, he ordered it again to be dug up, and to be thrown again into the river: But it was fished up a second time, and then interred with great

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ſecrecy. Godwin, equally ſervile and inſolent, ſubmitted to be his inſtrument in this unnatural and brutal action.

THAT nobleman knew, that he was univerſally believed to have been an accomplice in the barbarity exerciſed on Alfred, and that he was on that account obnoxious to Hardicanute; and perhaps he hoped, by diſplaying this rage againſt Harold's memory, to juſtify himſelf from having had any participation in his counſels. But prince Edward, being invited over by the king, immediately on his appearance, preferred an accuſation againſt Godwin for the murder of Alfred, and demanded juſtice for that crime. Godwin, in order to appeaſe the king, made him a magnificent preſent of a galley with a gilt ſtern, rowed by fourſcore men, who wore each of them a gold bracelet on his arm, weighing ſixteen ounces, and were armed and cloathed in the moſt ſumptuous manner. Hardicanute, pleaſed with the ſplendor of this ſpectacle, quickly forgot his brother's murder; and on Godwin's ſwearing that he was innocent of that crime, he allowed him to be acquitted.

THOUGH Hardicanute, before his acceſſion, had been called over by the vows of the Engliſh, he ſoon loſt the affections of the nation by his miſconduct; but nothing appeared more grievous to them, than his renewing the impoſition of Danegelt, and obliging the nation to pay a great ſum of money to the fleet, which brought him from Denmark. The diſcontents ran high in many places: In Worceſter the populace roſe, and put to death two of the collectors. The king, enraged at this oppoſition, ſwore vengeance againſt the city, and ordered three noblemen, Godwin, duke of Weſſex, Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia, to execute his menaces with the utmoſt rigour. They were obliged to ſet fire to the city, and deliver it up to be plundered by their ſoldiers; but they ſaved the lives of the

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the inhabitants; whom they confined in a ſmall iſland of the Severn, called Beverey, till, by their interceſſion, they were able to appeaſe the king, and obtain the pardon of the ſupplicants.

THIS violent government was of ſhort duration. Hardicanute died in two years after his acceſſion, at the nuptials of a Daniſh lord, which he had honoured with his preſence. His uſual habits of intemperance were ſo well known, that, notwithſtanding his robuſt conſtitution, his ſudden death gave as little ſurprize, as it did ſorrow, to his ſubjects.

EDWARD the CONFESSOR.

1041. THE Engliſh, on the death of Hardicanute, ſaw a favourable opportunity for recovering their liberty, and for ſhaking off the Daniſh yoke, under which they had ſo long laboured. Sweyn, king of Norway, the eldeſt ſon of Canute, was abſent; and as the two laſt kings had died without iſſue, none of that race preſented himſelf, nor any whom the Danes could ſupport as ſucceſſor to the throne. Prince Edward was fortunately at court on his brother's demiſe; and though the deſcendants of Edmond Ironſide were the true heirs of the Saxon family, yet their abſence in ſo remote a country as Hungary, appeared a ſufficient reaſon for their excluſion, to a people like the Engliſh, ſo little accuſtomed to obſerve a regular order in the ſucceſſion of their monarchs. All delays might be dangerous; and the preſent occaſion muſt haſtily be embraced; while the Danes, without concert, without a leader, aſtoniſhed at the preſent incident, and anxious only for their perſonal ſafety, durſt not oppoſe the united voice of the nation.

BUT this concurrence of circumſtances in favour of Edward, might have failed of its effect, had his ſucceſſion been

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been oppoſed by Godwin, whoſe power, alliances, and abilities gave him a great influence at all times, eſpecially amidſt thoſe ſudden opportunities, which always attend a revolution of government, and which, either ſeized or neglected, commonly prove deciſive. There were oppoſite reaſons, which divided men's hopes and fears with regard to Godwin's conduct. On the one hand, the credit of that nobleman lay chiefly in Weſſex, which was almoſt entirely inhabited by Engliſh: It was therefore preſumed, that he would ſecond the wiſhes of that people, in reſtoring the Saxon line, and in humbling the Danes, from whom he, as well as they, had reaſon to dread, as they had already felt, the moſt grievous oppreſſions. On the other hand, there ſubſiſted a declared animoſity between Edward and Godwin, on account of Alfred's murder; of which the latter had publicly been accuſed by the prince, and which he might believe ſo deep an offence, as could never, on account of any ſubſequent merits, be ſincerely pardoned. But their common friends here interpoſed; and repreſenting the neceſſity of their good correſpondence, obliged them to lay aſide all jealouſy and rancour, and concur in reſtoring liberty to their native country. Godwin only ſtipulated, that Edward, as a pledge of his ſincere reconciliation, ſhould promiſe to marry his daughter Editha; and having fortified himſelf by this alliance, he ſummoned at Gillingham a general council of the nation, and prepared every meaſure for ſecuring the ſucceſſion to Edward. The Engliſh were unanimous and zealous in their reſolutions; the Danes were divided and diſpirited: Any ſmall oppoſition, which appeared in this aſſembly, was brow-beaten and ſuppreſſed; and Edward was crowned king, with every demonſtration of duty and affection.

The triumph of the Engliſh, upon this ſignal and deciſive advantage, was at firſt attended with ſome inſult and

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and violence againſt the Danes; but the king, by the mildneſs of his character, ſoon reconciled the latter to his adminiſtration, and the diſtinction between the two nations gradually diſappeared. The Danes were interſperſed with the Engliſh in moſt of the provinces; they ſpoke nearly the ſame language; they differed little in their manners and laws; the prevalence of domeſtic diſſentions in Denmark, prevented, for a long time, any powerful invaſion from thence, which might awaken paſt animoſities; and as the Norman conqueſt, which enſued ſoon after, reduced both nations to equal ſubjection, there is no farther mention in hiſtory of any difference between them. The joy, however, of their preſent deliverance made ſuch impreſſion on the minds of the Engliſh, that they inſtituted an annual feſtival for celebrating that great event; and it was obſerved in ſome counties, even to the time of Spellman [u].

THE popularity, which Edward enjoyed on his acceſſion, was not deſtroyed by the firſt act of his adminiſtration, his reſuming all the grants of his immediate predeceſſors; an attempt, which is commonly attended with the moſt dangerous conſequences. The poverty of the crown convinced the nation, that this act of violence was become abſolutely neceſſary; and as the loſs fell chiefly on the Danes, who had obtained large grants from the late kings, their countrymen, on account of their ſervices in ſubduing the kingdom, the Engliſh were rather pleaſed to ſee them reduced to their primitive poverty. The king's ſeverity alſo towards his mother, the queen-dowager, though expoſed to ſome more cenſure, met not with very general diſapprobation. He had hitherto lived on indifferent terms with that princeſs: He accuſed her of neglecting him and his brother during their adverſe fortune [w]: He remarked, that, as the ſuperior qualities

[u] Spellm. Gloſſary in verbo *Heeday*.

[w] Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 237.

of

of Canute, and his better treatment of her, had made her entirely indifferent to the memory of Ethelred, ſhe alſo gave the preference to her children of the ſecond bed, and always regarded Hardicanute as her favourite. The ſame reaſons had probably made her unpopular in England; and though her benefactions to the monks obtained her the favour of that order, the nation was not, in general, diſpleaſed to ſee her ſtripped by Edward of immenſe treaſures which ſhe had amaſſed. He confined her, during the remainder of her life, in a monaſtery at Wincheſter; but carried his rigour againſt her no farther. The ſtories of his accuſing her of a participation in her ſon Alfred's murder, and of a criminal correſpondence with the biſhop of Wincheſter, and alſo of her juſtifying herſelf by treading barefoot, without receiving any hurt, over nine burning plough-ſhares, were the inventions of the monkiſh hiſtorians, and were propagated and believed from the ſilly wonder of poſterity [x].

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The Engliſh flattered themſelves, that, by the acceſſion of Edward, they were delivered for ever from the dominion of foreigners; but they ſoon found, that this evil was not yet entirely removed. The king had been educated in Normandy; and had contracted many intimacies with the natives of that country, as well as an affection for their manners [y]. The court of England was ſoon filled with Normans, who, being diſtinguiſhed both by the favour of Edward, and by a degree of cultivation ſuperior to that which was attained by the Engliſh in thoſe ages, ſoon rendered their language, cuſtoms, and laws faſhionable in the kingdom. The ſtudy of the French tongue became general among the people. The courtiers affected to imitate that nation in their dreſs, equipage, and entertainments: Even the lawyers employed a foreign language in their deeds and papers [z]: But above all, the church felt the influence and do-

[x] Higden, p. 277. [y] Ingulf, p. 62. [z] Ibid.

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minion of thoſe ſtrangers: Ulf and William, two Normans, who had formerly been the king's chaplains, were created biſhops of Dorcheſter and London. Robert, a Norman alſo, was promoted to the ſee of Canterbury [y], and always enjoyed the higheſt favour of his maſter, of which his abilities rendered him not unworthy. And though the king's prudence, or his want of authority, made him confer almoſt all the civil and military employments on the natives, the eccleſiaſtical preferments fell often to the ſhare of the Normans; and as the latter poſſeſſed Edward's confidence, they had ſecretly a great influence on public affairs, and excited the jealouſy of the Engliſh, particularly of earl Godwin [z].

THIS powerful nobleman, beſides being duke or earl of Weſſex, had the counties of Kent and Suſſex annexed to his government. His eldeſt ſon, Sweyn, poſſeſſed the ſame authority in the counties of Oxford, Berks, Gloceſter and Hereford: And Harold, his ſecond ſon, was duke of Eaſt-Anglia, and at the ſame time governor of Eſſex. The great authority of this family was ſupported by immenſe poſſeſſions and powerful alliances; and the abilities, as well as ambition, of Godwin himſelf contributed to render it ſtill more dangerous. A prince of greater capacity and vigour than Edward would have found it difficult to ſupport the dignity of the crown under ſuch circumſtances; and as the haughty temper of Godwin made him often forget the reſpect due to his prince, Edward's animoſity againſt him was grounded on perſonal as well as political conſiderations, on recent as well as more ancient injuries. The king, in purſuance of his engagements, had indeed married Editha, the daughter of Godwin [a]; but this alliance became a freſh ſource of enmity between them. Edward's hatred of the father was transferred to that princeſs; and Editha, though poſ-

[y] Chron. Sax. p. 161. [z] W. Malm. p. 80. [a] Chron. Sax. p. 157.

feſſed of many amiable accompliſhments, could never acquire the confidence and affection of her huſband. It is even pretended, that, during the whole courſe of her life, he abſtained from all commerce of love with her; and ſuch was the abſurd admiration paid to an inviolable chaſtity during thoſe ages, that his conduct in this particular is highly celebrated by the monkiſh hiſtorians, and greatly contributed to his acquiring the title of ſaint and confeſſor [b]. 1048.

THE moſt popular pretence, on which Godwin could ground his diſaffection to the king and his adminiſtration, was to complain of the influence of the Normans in the government; and a declared oppoſition had thence ariſen between him and theſe favourites. It was not long before this animoſity broke into action. Euſtace, count of Bologne, having paid a viſit to the king, paſſed by Dover in his return: One of his train, being refuſed entrance to a lodging, which had been aſſigned him, attempted to make his way by force, and in the conteſt he wounded the maſter of the houſe. The inhabitants revenged this inſult by the death of the ſtranger; the count and his train took arms, and murdered the wounded townſman in his own houſe; a tumult enſued; near twenty perſons were killed on each ſide; and Euſtace, being overpowered by numbers, was obliged to ſave his life by flight from the fury of the populace. He hurried immediately to court and complained of the uſage he had met with: The king entered zealouſly into the quarrel, and was highly diſpleaſed that a ſtranger of ſuch diſtinction, whom he had invited over to his court, ſhould, without any juſt cauſe, as he believed, have felt ſo ſenſibly the inſolence and animoſity of his people. He gave orders to Godwin, in whoſe government Dover lay, to repair immediately to the place, and to

[b] W. Malm. p. 80. Higden, p. 277. Abbas Rieval. p. 366, 377. Math. Weſt. p. 221. Chron. Thom. Wykes, p. 21. Anglia Sacra, vol. 1. p. 241.

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puniſh the inhabitants for the crime: But Godwin, who deſired rather to encourage, than repreſs, the popular diſcontents againſt foreigners, refuſed obedience, and endeavoured to throw the whole blame on the count of Bologne, and his retinue [c]. Edward, touched in ſo ſenſible a point, ſaw the neceſſity of exerting the royal authority; and he threatened Godwin, if he perſiſted in his diſobedience, to make him feel the utmoſt effects of his reſentment.

THE earl, perceiving a rupture to be unavoidable, and pleaſed to embark in a cauſe, where, it was likely, he ſhould be ſupported by his countrymen, made preparations for his own defence, or rather for an attack on Edward. Under pretence of repreſſing ſome diſorders on the Welſh frontier, he ſecretly aſſembled a great army, and was approaching the king, who reſided, without any military force, and without ſuſpicion, at Gloceſter [d]. Edward applied for protection to Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia, two powerful noblemen, whoſe jealouſy of Godwin's greatneſs, as well as their duty to the crown, engaged them to defend the king in this extremity. They haſtened to him with ſuch of their followers as they could aſſemble on a ſudden; and finding the danger much greater than they had at firſt apprehended, they iſſued orders for muſtering all the forces within their government, and for marching them without delay to the defence of the king's perſon and authority. Edward, meanwhile, endeavoured to gain time by negociation; while Godwin, who thought the king entirely in his power, and who was willing to ſave appearances, fell into the ſnare; and not ſenſible, that he ought to have no farther reſerve after he had proceeded ſo far, he loſt the favourable opportunity of rendering himſelf maſter of the government.

[c] Chron. Sax. p. 163. W. Malm. p. 81. Higden, p. 279.
[d] Chron. Sax. p. 163. W. Malm. p. 81.

THE

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THE Engliſh, though they had no high idea of Edward's vigour and capacity, bore him great affection on account of his humanity, juſtice, and piety, as well as the long race of their native kings, from whom he was deſcended; and they haſtened from all quarters to defend him from the preſent danger. His army was now ſo conſiderable, that he ventured to take the field; and marching to London, he ſummoned a great council of the kingdom, to judge of the rebellion of Godwin and his ſons. Theſe noblemen pretended at firſt that they were willing to ſtand their trial; but having in vain endeavoured to make their adherents perſiſt in rebellion, they offered to come to London, provided they might receive hoſtages for their ſafety: This propoſal being rejected, they were obliged to diſband the remains of their forces, and to have recourſe to flight. Baldwin, earl of Flanders, gave protection to Godwin and his three ſons, Gurth, Sweyn, and Toſti; the latter of whom had married the daughter of that prince: Harold and Leofwin, two others of his ſons, took ſhelter in Ireland. The eſtates of the father and ſons were confiſcated: Their governments were given to others: Queen Editha was confined in a monaſtery at Warewel: And the greatneſs of this family, once ſo formidable, ſeemed now to be totally ſupplanted and overthrown.

BUT Godwin had fixed his authority on too firm a baſis, and he was too ſtrongly ſupported by alliances both foreign and domeſtic, not to occaſion farther diſturbances, and make new efforts for his re-eſtabliſhment. The earl of Flanders permitted him to purchaſe and hire 1052.
ſhips within his harbours; and Godwin, having manned them with his followers, and with free-booters of all nations, put to ſea, and attempted to make a deſcent at Sandwich. The king, informed of his preparations, had equipped a conſiderable fleet, much ſuperior to that of

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the enemy; and the earl haſtily, before their appearance, made his retreat into the Flemiſh harbours [e]. The Engliſh court, allured by the preſent ſecurity, and deſtitute of all vigorous counſels, allowed the ſeamen to diſband, and the fleet to go to decay [f]; while Godwin, expecting this event, kept his men in readineſs for action. He put to ſea immediately, and ſailed to the Iſle of Wight, where he was joined by Harold with a ſquadron, which that nobleman had collected in Ireland. He was now maſter of the ſea; and entering every harbour in the ſouthern coaſt, he ſeized all the ſhips [g], and ſummoned his followers in thoſe counties, which had ſo long been ſubjected to his government, to aſſiſt him in procuring juſtice to himſelf, his family, and his country, againſt the tyranny of foreigners. Reinforced by great numbers from all quarters, he entered the Thames; and appearing before London, threw every thing into confuſion. The king alone ſeemed reſolute to defend himſelf to the laſt extremity; but the interpoſition of the Engliſh nobility, many of whom favoured Godwin's pretenſions, made Edward hearken to terms of accommodation; and the feigned humility of the earl, who diſclaimed all intentions of offering violence to his ſovereign, and deſired only to juſtify himſelf by a fair and open trial, paved the way for his more eaſy admiſſion. It was ſtipulated, that he ſhould give hoſtages for his good behaviour, and that the primate and all the foreigners ſhould be baniſhed: By this treaty, the preſent danger of a civil war was obviated, but the authority of the crown was conſiderably impaired, or rather entirely annihilated. Edward, ſenſible that he had not power ſufficient to ſecure Godwin's hoſtages in England, ſent them over to his kinſman, the young duke of Normandy.

[e] Sim. Dun. p. 186. [f] Chron. Sax. p. 166. [g] Ibid.

GODWIN'S

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GODWIN's death, which happened ſoon after, while he was ſitting at table with the king, prevented him from farther eſtabliſhing the authority which he had acquired, and from reducing Edward to ſtill greater ſubjection *. He was ſucceeded in the government of Weſſex, Suſſex, Kent, and Eſſex, and in the office of ſteward of the houſehold, a place of great power, by his ſon, Harold, who was actuated by an ambition equal to that of his father, and was ſuperior to him in addreſs, in inſinuation, and in virtue. By a modeſt and gentle demeanor, he acquired the good-will of Edward; at leaſt, ſoftened that hatred which the prince had ſo long borne his family [h]; and gaining every day new partizans by his bounty and affability, he proceeded, in a more ſilent, and therefore a more dangerous manner, to the encreaſe of his authority. The king, who had not ſufficient vigour directly to oppoſe his progreſs, knew of no other expedient than that hazardous one, of raiſing him a rival in the family of Leofric, duke of Mercia, whoſe ſon, Algar, was inveſted with the government of Eaſt-Anglia, which, before the baniſhment of Harold, had belonged to the latter nobleman. But this policy, of balancing oppoſite parties, required a more ſteady hand to manage it than that of Edward, and naturally produced faction, and even civil broils, among nobles of ſuch mighty and independant authority. Algar was ſoon after expelled his government by the intrigues and power of Harold; but being protected by Griffith, prince of Wales, who had married his daughter, as well as by the power of his father, Leofric, he obliged Harold to ſubmit to an accommodation, and was reinſtated in the government of Eaſt-Anglia. This peace was not of long duration: Harold, taking advantage of Leofric's death, which happened ſoon after, expelled Algar anew, and baniſhed him the kingdom: And though that nobleman made a freſh irruption into Eaſt-Anglia with an

* See note [E] at the end of the volume.

[h] Brompton, p. 948.

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army of Norwegians, and over-ran the country, his death ſoon freed Harold from the pretenſions of ſo dangerous a rival. Edward, the eldeſt ſon of Algar, was indeed advanced to the government of Mercia; but the balance, which the king deſired to eſtabliſh between thoſe potent families, was wholly loſt, and the influence of Harold greatly preponderated.

1055. THE death of Siward, duke of Northumberland, made the way ſtill more open to the ambition of that nobleman. Siward, beſides his other merits, had acquired honour to England, by his ſucceſsful conduct in the only foreign enterprize undertaken during the reign of Edward. Duncan, king of Scotland, was a prince of a gentle diſpoſition, but poſſeſſed not the genius requiſite for governing a country ſo turbulent, and ſo much infeſted by the intrigues and animoſities of the great. Macbeth, a powerful nobleman, and nearly allied to the crown, not content with curbing the king's authority, carried ſtill farther his peſtilent ambition: He put his ſovereign to death; chaced Malcolm Kenmore, his ſon and heir, into England; and uſurped the crown. Siward, whoſe daughter was married to Duncan, embraced, by Edward's orders, the protection of this diſtreſſed family: He marched an army into Scotland; and having defeated and killed Macbeth in battle, he reſtored Malcolm to the throne of his anceſtors [h]. This ſervice, added to his former connections with the royal family of Scotland, brought a great acceſſion to the authority of Siward in the north; but as he had loſt his eldeſt ſon, Oſbern, in the action with Macbeth, it proved in the iſſue fatal to his family. His ſecond ſon, Walthoef, appeared, on his father's death, too young to be entruſted with the government of Northum-

[h] W. Malm. p. 79. Hoveden, p. 443. Chron. Mailr. p. 158. Buchanan, p. 115. edit. 1715.

berland;

berland; and Harold's influence obtained that dukedom for his own brother Tofti. CHAP. III.

THERE are two circumſtances related of Siward, which diſcover his high ſenſe of honour, and his martial diſpoſition. When intelligence was brought him of his ſon Oſbern's death, he was inconſolable; till he heard, that the wound was received in the breaſt, and that he had behaved with great gallantry in the action. When he found his own death approaching, he ordered his ſervants to clothe him in a complete ſuit of armour; and ſitting erect on the couch, with a ſpear in his hand, declared, that, in that poſture, the only one worthy of a warrior, he would patiently await the fatal moment.

THE king, now worn out with cares and infirmities, felt himſelf far advanced in the decline of life; and having no iſſue himſelf, began to think of appointing a ſucceſſor to the kingdom. He ſent a deputation into Hungary, to invite over his nephew, Edward, ſon of his elder brother, and the only remaining heir of the Saxon line. That prince, whoſe ſucceſſion to the crown would have been eaſy and undiſputed, came to England with his children, Edgar, ſurnamed Atheling, Margaret and Chriſtina; but his death, which happened a few days after his arrival, threw the king into new difficulties. He ſaw, that the great power and ambition of Harold had tempted him to think of obtaining poſſeſſion of the throne on the firſt vacancy, and that Edgar, on account of his youth and inexperience, was very unfit to oppoſe the pretenſions of ſo popular and enterpriſing a rival. The animoſity, which he had long borne to earl Godwin, made him averſe to the ſucceſſion of his ſon; and he could not, without extreme reluctance, think of an encreaſe of grandeur to a family, which had riſen on the ruins of royal authority, and which, by the murder of Alfred, his brother, had contributed ſo much to the weakening of the

Saxon

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Saxon line. In this uncertainty, he ſecretly caſt his eye towards his kinſman, William duke of Normandy, as the only perſon whoſe power, and reputation, and capacity, could ſupport any deſtination which he might make in his favour to the excluſion of Harold, and his family [i].

THIS famous prince was natural ſon of Robert, duke of Normandy, by Harlotta, daughter of a tanner in Falaiſe [k], and was very early eſtabliſhed in that grandeur, from which his birth ſeemed to have ſet him at ſo great a diſtance. While he was but nine years of age, his father had reſolved to undertake a pilgrimage to Jeruſalem; a faſhionable act of devotion, which had taken place of the pilgrimages to Rome, and which, as it was attended with more difficulty and danger, and carried thoſe religious adventurers to the firſt ſources of Chriſtianity, appeared to them much more pious and meritorious. Before his departure, he aſſembled the ſtates of the dutchy; and informing them of his deſign, he engaged them to ſwear allegiance to his natural ſon, William, whom, as he had no legitimate iſſue, he intended, in caſe he ſhould die in the pilgrimage, to leave ſucceſſor to his dominions [l]. As he was a prudent prince, he could not but foreſee the great inconveniences which muſt attend this journey, and this ſettlement of his ſucceſſion; ariſing from the natural turbulency of the great, the claims from other branches of the ducal family, and the power of the French monarch: But all theſe conſiderations were ſurmounted by the prevailing zeal for pilgrimages [m]; and probably, the more important they were, the more would Robert exult in ſacrificing them to what he imagined to be his religious duty.

THIS prince, as he had apprehended, died in his pilgrimage; and the minority of his ſon was attended with

[i] Ingulf, p. 68. [k] Brompton, p. 910. [l] W. Malm. p. 95. [m] Ypod. Neuſt. p. 452.

all

all thoſe diſorders, which were almoſt unavoidable in that ſituation. The licentious nobles, freed from the awe of ſovereign authority, broke out into perſonal animoſities againſt each other, and made the whole country a ſcene of war and devaſtation [n]. Roger, count of Toni, and Alain, count of Britanny, advanced claims to the dominion of the ſtate; and Henry I. king of France, thought the opportunity favourable for reducing the power of a vaſſal, who had originally acquired his ſettlement in ſo violent and invidious a manner, and who had long appeared formidable to his ſovereign [o]. The regency eſtabliſhed by Robert encountered great difficulties in ſupporting the government under this complication of dangers; and the young prince, when he came to maturity, found himſelf reduced to a very low condition. But the great qualities, which he ſoon diſplayed in the field and in the cabinet, gave encouragement to his friends, and ſtruck a terror into his enemies. He oppoſed himſelf on all ſides againſt his rebellious ſubjects, and againſt foreign invaders; and by his valour and conduct prevailed in every action. He obliged the French king to grant him peace on reaſonable terms; he expelled all pretenders to the ſovereignty; and he reduced his turbulent barons to pay ſubmiſſion to his authority, and to ſuſpend their mutual animoſities. The natural ſeverity of his temper appeared in a rigorous adminiſtration of juſtice; and having found the happy effects of this plan of government, without which the laws in thoſe ages became totally impotent, he regarded it as a fixed maxim, that an inflexible conduct was the firſt duty of a ſovereign.

THE tranquillity, which he had eſtabliſhed in his dominions, had given William leiſure to pay a viſit to the king of England during the time of Godwin's baniſh-

[n] W. Malm. p. 95. Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 1.
[o] W. Malm. p. 97.

ment;

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ment; and he was received in a manner suitable to the great reputation which he had acquired, to the relation by which he was connected with Edward, and to the obligations which that prince owed to his family [p]. On the return of Godwin, and the expulsion of the Norman favourites, Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, had, before his departure, persuaded Edward to think of adopting William as his successor; a counsel, which was favoured by the king's aversion to Godwin, his prepossessions towards the Normans, and his esteem of the duke. That prelate, therefore, received a commission to inform William of the king's intentions in his favour; and he was the first person that opened the mind of the prince to entertain those ambitious hopes [q]. But Edward, irresolute and feeble in his purpose, finding that the English would more easily acquiesce in the restoration of the Saxon line, had, in the mean time, invited his brother's descendants from Hungary, with a view of having them recognized heirs to the crown. The death of his nephew, and the inexperience and unpromising qualities of young Edgar, made him resume his former intentions in favour of the duke of Normandy; though his aversion to hazardous enterprizes engaged him to postpone the execution, and even to keep his purpose secret from all his ministers.

HAROLD, mean while, proceeded, after a more open manner, in encreasing his popularity, in establishing his power, and in preparing the way for his advancement on the first vacancy; an event which, from the age and infirmities of the king, appeared not very distant. But there was still an obstacle, which it was requisite for him previously to overcome. Earl Godwin, when restored to

[p] Hoveden, p. 442. Ingulf, p. 65. Chron. Mailr. p. 157. Higden, p. 279. [q] Ingulf, p. 68. Gul. Gemet. Lib. 7. cap. 31. Order. Vitalis, p. 492.

his

his power and fortune, had given hoſtages for his good behaviour; and among the reſt one ſon and one grandſon, whom Edward, for greater ſecurity, as has been obſerved, had conſigned to the cuſtody of the duke of Normandy. Harold, though not aware of the duke's being his competitor, was uneaſy, that ſuch near relations ſhould be detained priſoners in a foreign country; and he was afraid, leſt William ſhould, in favour of Edgar, retain theſe pledges as a check on the ambition of any other pretender. He repreſented, therefore, to the king, his unfeigned ſubmiſſion to royal authority, his ſteady duty to his prince, and the little neceſſity there was, after ſuch a uniform trial of his obedience, to detain any longer thoſe hoſtages, who had been required on the firſt compoſing of civil diſcords. By theſe topics, enforced by his great power, he extorted the king's conſent to releaſe them; and in order to effectuate his purpoſe, he immediately proceeded, with a numerous retinue, on his journey to Normandy. A tempeſt drove him on the territory of Guy, count of Ponthieu, who, being informed of his quality, immediately detained him priſoner, and demanded an exorbitant ſum for his ranſom. Harold found means to convey intelligence of his ſituation to the duke of Normandy; and repreſented, that, while he was proceeding to *his* court, in execution of a commiſſion from the king of England, he had met with this harſh treatment from the mercenary diſpoſition of the count of Ponthieu.

WILLIAM was immediately ſenſible of the importance of the incident. He foreſaw, that, if he could once gain Harold, either by favours or menaces, his way to the throne of England would be open, and Edward would meet with no farther obſtacle in executing the favourable intentions, which he had entertained in his behalf. He ſent, therefore, a meſſenger to Guy, in order to demand the liberty of his priſoner; and that nobleman, not daring to refuſe ſo great a prince, put Harold into the hands of

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the Norman, who conducted him to Roüen. William received him with every demonſtration of reſpect and friendſhip; and after ſhowing himſelf diſpoſed to comply with his deſire, in delivering up the hoſtages, he took an opportunity of diſcloſing to him the great ſecret, of his pretenſions to the crown of England, and of the will which Edward intended to make in his favour. He deſired the aſſiſtance of Harold in perfecting that deſign; he made profeſſions of the utmoſt gratitude in return for ſo great an obligation; he promiſed that the preſent grandeur of Harold's family, which ſupported itſelf with difficulty under the jealouſy and hatred of Edward, ſhould receive new encreaſe from a ſucceſſor, who would be ſo greatly beholden to him for his advancement. Harold was ſurprized at this declaration of the duke; but being ſenſible that he ſhould never recover his own liberty, much leſs that of his brother and nephew, if he refuſed the demand, he feigned a compliance with William, renounced all hopes of the crown for himſelf, and profeſſed his ſincere intention of ſupporting the will of Edward, and ſeconding the pretenſions of the duke of Normandy. William, to bind him faſter to his intereſts, beſides offering him one of his daughters in marriage, required him to take an oath, that he would fulfil his promiſes; and in order to render that oath more obligatory, he employed an artifice, well ſuited to the ignorance and ſuperſtition of the age. He ſecretly conveyed under the altar, on which Harold agreed to ſwear, the reliques of ſome of the moſt revered martyrs; and when Harold had taken the oath, he ſhowed him the reliques, and admoniſhed him to obſerve religiouſly an engagement, which had been ratified by ſo tremendous a ſanction [r]. The Engliſh nobleman was aſtoniſhed; but diſſembling his concern,

[r] Wace, p. 459, 460. MS. penes Carte, p. 354. W. Malm. p. 93. H. Hunt. p. 366. Hoveden, p. 449. Brompton, p. 947.

he

he renewed the ſame profeſſions, and was diſmiſſed with all the marks of mutual confidence by the duke of Normandy. CHAP. III.

When Harold found himſelf at liberty, his ambition ſuggeſted caſuiſtry ſufficient to juſtify to him the violation of an oath, which had been extorted from him by fear, and which, if fulfilled, might be attended with the ſubjection of his native country to a foreign power. He continued ſtill to practiſe every art of popularity; to encreaſe the number of his partizans; to reconcile the minds of the Engliſh to the idea of his ſucceſſion; to revive their hatred of the Normans; and by an oſtentation of his power and influence, to deter the timorous Edward from executing his intended deſtination in favour of William. Fortune, about this time, threw two incidents in his way, by which he was enabled to acquire general favour, and to encreaſe the character, which he had already attained, of virtue and ability.

The Welſh, though a leſs formidable enemy than the Danes, had long been accuſtomed to infeſt the weſtern borders: After committing ſpoil on the low countries, they uſually made a haſty retreat into their mountains, where they were ſheltered from the purſuit of their enemies, and were ready to ſeize the firſt favourable opportunity of renewing their depredations. Griffith, the reigning prince, had greatly diſtinguiſhed himſelf in thoſe incurſions; and his name had become ſo terrible to the Engliſh, that Harold found he could do nothing more acceptable to the public, and more honourable for himſelf, than the ſuppreſſing of ſo dangerous an enemy. He formed the plan of an expedition againſt Wales; and having prepared ſome light-armed foot to purſue the natives into their faſtneſſes, ſome cavalry to ſcour the open country, and a ſquadron of ſhips to attack the ſea-coaſt, he employed at once all theſe forces againſt the Welſh,

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prosecuted his advantages with vigour, made no intermission in his assaults, and at last reduced the enemy to such distress, that, in order to prevent their total destruction, they made a sacrifice of their prince, whose head they cut off, and sent to Harold; and they were content to receive as their sovereigns two Welsh noblemen appointed by Edward to rule over them. The other incident was no less honourable to Harold.

Tosti, brother of this nobleman, who had been created duke of Northumberland, being of a violent, tyrannical temper, had acted with such cruelty and injustice, that the inhabitants rose in rebellion, and chaced him from his government. Morcar and Edwin, two brothers, who possessed great power in those parts, and who were grandsons of the great duke, Leofric, concurred in the insurrection; and the former, being elected duke, advanced with an army, to oppose Harold, who was commissioned by the king to reduce and chastise the Northumbrians. Before the armies came to action, Morcar, well acquainted with the generous disposition of the English commander, endeavoured to justify his own conduct. He represented to Harold, that Tosti had behaved in a manner unworthy of the station to which he was advanced, and no one, not even a brother, could support such tyranny, without participating, in some degree, of the infamy attending it; that the Northumbrians, accustomed to a legal administration, and regarding it as their birthright, were willing to submit to the king, but required a governor who would pay regard to their rights and privileges; that they had been taught by their ancestors, that death was preferable to servitude, and had come to the field determined to perish, rather than suffer a renewal of those indignities, to which they had so long been exposed; and they trusted, that Harold, on reflection, would not defend in another that violent conduct, from which he himself, in his own government, had always kept at so great

great a distance. This vigorous remonstrance was accompanied with such a detail of facts, so well supported, that Harold found it prudent to abandon his brother's cause; and returning to Edward, he persuaded him to pardon the Northumbrians, and to confirm Morcar in the government. He even married the sister of that nobleman [t]; and by his interest procured Edwin, the younger brother, to be elected into the government of Mercia. Tosti in a rage departed the kingdom, and took shelter in Flanders with earl Baldwin, his father-in-law.

By this marriage, Harold broke all measures with the duke of Normandy; and William clearly perceived, that he could no longer rely on the oaths and promises, which he had extorted from him. But the English nobleman was now in such a situation, that he deemed it no longer necessary to dissemble. He had, in his conduct towards the Northumbrians, given such a specimen of his moderation as had gained him the affections of his countrymen. He saw, that almost all England was engaged in his interests; while he himself possessed the government of Wessex, Morcar that of Northumberland, and Edwin that of Mercia. He now openly aspired to the succession; and insisted, that, since it was necessary, by the confession of all, to set aside the royal family, on account of the imbecility of Edgar, the sole surviving heir, there was no one so capable of filling the throne, as a nobleman, of great power, of mature age, of long experience, of approved courage and ability, who, being a native of the kingdom, would effectually secure it against the dominion and tyranny of foreigners. Edward, broken with age and infirmities, saw the difficulties too great for him to encounter; and though his inveterate prepossessions kept him from seconding the pretensions of Harold, he took but feeble and irresolute steps for securing the succession to the duke of Normandy *. While he continued

[t] Order. Vitalis, p. 492.

* See note [F] at the end of the volume.

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in this uncertainty, he was surprised by sickness, which brought him to his grave, on the fifth of January 1066, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and twenty-fifth of his reign.

THIS prince, to whom the monks gave the title of saint and confessor, was the last of the Saxon line, that ruled in England. Though his reign was peaceable and fortunate, he owed his prosperity less to his own ability than to the conjunctures of the times. The Danes, employed in other enterprizes, attempted not those incursions, which had been so troublesome to all his predecessors, and fatal to some of them. The facility of his disposition made him acquiesce under the government of Godwin, and his son Harold; and the abilities, as well as the power of these noblemen, enabled them, while they were entrusted with authority, to preserve domestic peace and tranquillity. The most commendable circumstance of Edward's government was his attention to the administration of justice, and his compiling for that purpose a body of laws, which he collected from the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, and Alfred. This compilation, though now lost (for the laws that pass under Edward's name were composed afterwards [u]) was long the object of affection to the English nation.

EDWARD the Confessor was the first that touched for the king's evil: The opinion of his sanctity procured belief to this cure among the people: His successors regarded it as a part of their state and grandeur to uphold the same opinion. It has been continued down to our time; and the practice was first dropped by the present royal family, who observed, that it could no longer give amazement even to the populace, and was attended with ridicule in the eyes of all men of understanding.

[u] Spelm. in verbo *Bellua*.

HAROLD.

HAROLD.

HAROLD had ſo well prepared matters before the death of Edward, that he immediately ſtepped into the vacant throne; and his acceſſion was attended with as little oppoſition and diſturbance, as if he had ſucceeded by the moſt undoubted hereditary title. The citizens of London were his zealous partizans: The biſhops and clergy had adopted his cauſe: And all the powerful nobility, connected with him by alliance or friendſhip, willingly ſeconded his pretenſions. The title of Edgar Atheling, was ſcarcely mentioned: Much leſs, the claim of the duke of Normandy: And Harold, aſſembling his partizans, received the crown from their hands, without waiting for the free deliberation of the ſtates, or regularly ſubmitting the queſtion to their choice or determination [w]. If any were averſe to this reſolution, they were obliged to conceal their ſentiments; and the new prince, taking a general ſilence for conſent, and founding his title on the ſuppoſed ſuffrages of the people, which appeared unanimous, was, on the day immediately ſucceeding Edward's death, crowned and anointed King, by Aldred, archbiſhop of York. The whole nation ſeemed joyfully to acquieſce in his elevation. 1066. January.

THE firſt ſymptoms of danger, which the king diſcovered, came from abroad, and from his own brother, Toſti, who had ſubmitted to a voluntary baniſhment in Flanders. Enraged at the ſucceſsful ambition of Harold, to which he himſelf had fallen a victim, he filled the court of Baldwin with complaints of the injuſtice, which he had

[w] G. Pict. p. 196. Ypod. Neuſt. p. 436. Order. Vitalis, p. 492. M. Weſt. p. 221. W. Malm. p. 93. Ingulf, p. 68. Brompton, p. 957. Knyghton, p. 2339. H. Hunt. p. 210. Many of the hiſtorians ſay, that Harold was regularly elected by the ſtates: Some, that Edward left him his ſucceſſor by will.

 ſuffered;

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ſuffered: He engaged the intereſt of that family againſt his brother: He endeavoured to form intrigues with ſome of the diſcontented nobles in England: He ſent his emiſſaries to Norway, in order to rouze to arms the free-booters of that kingdom, and to excite their hopes of reaping advantage from the unſettled ſtate of affairs on the uſurpation of the new king: And that he might render the combination more formidable, he made a journey to Normandy; in expectation that the duke, who had married Matilda, another daughter of Baldwin, would, in revenge of his own injuries, as well as thoſe of Toſti, ſecond, by his counſels and forces, the projected invaſion of England [x].

THE duke of Normandy, when he firſt received intelligence of Harold's intrigues and acceſſion, had been moved to the higheſt pitch of indignation; but that he might give the better colour to his pretenſions, he ſent an embaſſy to England, upbraiding that prince with his breach of faith, and ſummoning him to reſign immediately poſſeſſion of the kingdom. Harold replied to the Norman ambaſſadors, that the oath, with which he was reproached, had been extorted by the well-grounded fear of violence, and could never, for that reaſon, be regarded as obligatory: That he had had no commiſſion, either from the late king or the ſtates of England, who alone could diſpoſe of the crown, to make any tender of the ſucceſſion to the duke of Normandy; and if he, a private perſon, had aſſumed ſo much authority, and had even voluntarily ſworn to ſupport the duke's pretenſions, the oath was unlawful, and it was his duty to ſeize the firſt opportunity of breaking it: That he had obtained the crown by the unanimous ſuffrages of the people; and ſhould prove himſelf totally unworthy of their favour, did he not ſtrenuouſly maintain thoſe national liberties, with which they had entruſted him: And that the duke, if he made any at-

[x] Order. Vitalis, p. 492.

tempt

tempt by force of arms, ſhould experience the power of an united nation, conducted by a prince, who, ſenſible of the obligations impoſed on him by his royal dignity, was determined, that the ſame moment ſhould put a period to his life and to his government *y*. CHAP. III.

THIS anſwer was no other than William expected; and he had previouſly fixed his reſolution of making an attempt upon England. Conſulting only his courage, his reſentment, and his ambition, he overlooked all the difficulties, inſeparable from an attack on a great kingdom by ſuch inferior force, and he ſaw only the circumſtances, which would facilitate his enterprize. He conſidered, that England, ever ſince the acceſſion of Canute, had enjoyed profound tranquillity, during a period of near fifty years; and it would require time for its ſoldiers, enervated by long peace, to learn diſcipline, and its generals experience. He knew, that it was entirely unprovided with fortified towns, by which it could prolong the war; but muſt venture its whole fortune in one deciſive action againſt a veteran enemy, who, being once maſter of the field, would be in a condition to over-run the kingdom. He ſaw that Harold, though he had given proofs of vigour and bravery, had newly mounted a throne, which he had acquired by faction, from which he had excluded a very ancient royal family, and which was likely to totter under him by its own inſtability, much more if ſhaken by any violent external impulſe. And he hoped, that the very circumſtance of his croſſing the ſea, quitting his own country, and leaving himſelf no hopes of retreat; as it would aſtoniſh the enemy by the boldneſs of the enterprize, would inſpirit his ſoldiers by deſpair, and rouze them to ſuſtain the reputation of the Norman arms.

THE Normans, as they had long been diſtinguiſhed by valour among all the European nations, had at this time

y W. Malm. p. 99. Higden, p. 285. Matth. Weſt. p. 222. De Geſt. Angel. incerto auctore, p. 331.

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attained to the higheſt pitch of military glory. Beſides acquiring by arms ſuch a noble territory in France, beſides defending it againſt continual attempts of the French monarch and all its neighbours, beſides exerting many acts of vigour under their preſent ſovereign; they had, about this very time, revived their ancient fame, by the moſt hazardous exploits, and the moſt wonderful ſucceſſes, in the other extremity of Europe. A few Norman adventurers in Italy had acquired ſuch an aſcendant, not only over the Italians and Greeks, but the Germans and Saracens, that they expelled thoſe foreigners, procured to themſelves ample eſtabliſhments, and laid the foundation of the opulent kingdom of Naples and Sicily [z]. Theſe enterprizes of men, who were all of them vaſſals in Normandy, many of them baniſhed for faction and rebellion, excited the ambition of the haughty William; who diſdained, after ſuch examples of fortune and valour, to be deterred from making an attack on a neighbouring country, where he could be ſupported by the whole force of his principality.

THE ſituation alſo of Europe inſpired William with hopes, that, beſides his brave Normans, he might employ againſt England the flower of the military force, which was diſperſed in all the neighbouring ſtates. France, Germany, and the Low Countries, by the progreſs of the feudal inſtitutions, were divided and ſubdivided into many principalities and baronies; and the poſſeſſors, enjoying the civil juriſdiction within themſelves, as well as the right of arms, acted, in many reſpects, as independant ſovereigns, and maintained their properties and privileges, leſs by the authority of laws, than by their own force and valour. A military ſpirit had univerſally diffuſed itſelf throughout Europe; and the ſeveral leaders, whoſe minds were elevated by their princely ſituation, greedily em-

[z] Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 32.

braced

braced the moſt hazardous enterprizes, and being accuſtomed to nothing from their infancy but recitals of the ſucceſs attending wars and battles, they were prompted by a natural ambition to imitate thoſe adventures, which they heard ſo much celebrated, and which were ſo much exaggerated by the credulity of the age. United, however looſely, by their duty to one ſuperior lord, and by their connexions with the great body of the community, to which they belonged, they deſired to ſpread their fame each beyond his own diſtrict; and in all aſſemblies, whether inſtituted for civil deliberations, for military expeditions, or merely for ſhow and entertainment, to outſhine each other by the reputation of ſtrength and proweſs. Hence their genius for chivalry; hence their impatience of peace and tranquillity; and hence their readineſs to embark in any dangerous enterprize, how little ſoever intereſted in its failure or ſucceſs. CHAP. III.

WILLIAM, by his power, his courage, and his abilities, had long maintained a pre-eminence among thoſe haughty chieftains; and every one who deſired to ſignalize himſelf by his addreſs in military exerciſes, or his valour in action, had been ambitious of acquiring a reputation in the court and in the armies of Normandy. Entertained with that hoſpitality and courteſy, which diſtinguiſhed the age, they had formed attachments to the prince, and greedily attended to the proſpects of glory and advantage, which he promiſed them in return for their concurrence in an expedition againſt England. The more grandeur there appeared in the attempt, the more it ſuited their romantic ſpirit: The fame of the intended invaſion was already diffuſed every where: Multitudes crowded to tender to the duke their ſervice, with that of their vaſſals and retainers [a]: And William found leſs difficulty in compleating his levies, than in chuſing the moſt

[a] Gul. Pictavenſis, p. 198.

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veteran and experienced forces, and in rejecting the offers of thoſe, who were impatient to acquire fame under ſo renowned a leader.

Besides theſe advantages, which William owed to his perſonal valour and good conduct; he was indebted to fortune for procuring him ſome aſſiſtance, and alſo for removing many obſtacles, which it was natural for him to expect in an undertaking, in which all his neighbours were ſo deeply intereſted. Conan, count of Britanny, was his mortal enemy: In order to throw a damp upon the duke's enterprize, he choſe this conjuncture for reviving his claim to Normandy itſelf; and he required, that, in caſe of William's ſucceſs againſt England, the poſſeſſion of that dutchy might devolve to him [b]. But Conan died ſuddenly after making this demand; and Hoel, his ſucceſſor, inſtead of adopting the malignity, or more properly ſpeaking, the prudence of his predeceſſor, zealouſly ſeconded the duke's views, and ſent his eldeſt ſon, Alain Fergant, to ſerve under him with a body of five thouſand Bretons. The counts of Anjou and of Flanders encouraged their ſubjects to engage in the expedition; and even the court of France, though it might juſtly fear the aggrandizement of ſo dangerous a vaſſal, purſued not its intereſts on this occaſion with ſufficient vigour and reſolution. Philip I. the reigning monarch, was a minor; and William, having communicated his project to the council, having deſired aſſiſtance, and offered to do homage, in caſe of his ſucceſs, for the crown of England, was indeed openly ordered to lay aſide all thoughts of the enterprize; but the earl of Flanders, his father-in-law, being at the head of the regency, favoured under-hand his levies, and ſecretly encouraged the adventurous nobility to inliſt under the ſtandard of the duke of Normandy.

[b] Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 33.

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THE emperor, Henry IV. beſides openly giving all his vaſſals permiſſion to embark in this expedition, which ſo much engaged the attention of Europe, promiſed his protection to the dutchy of Normandy during the abſence of the prince, and thereby enabled him to employ his whole force in the invaſion of England [c]. But the moſt important ally, whom William gained by his negotiations, was the pope, who had a mighty influence over the ancient barons, no leſs devout in their religious principles than valorous in their military enterprizes. The Roman pontiff, after an inſenſible progreſs during ſeveral ages of darkneſs and ignorance, began now to lift his head openly above all the princes of Europe; to aſſume the office of a mediator, or even an arbiter, in the quarrels of the greateſt monarchs; to interpoſe in all ſecular affairs; and to obtrude his dictates as ſovereign laws on his obſequious diſciples. It was a ſufficient motive to Alexander II. the reigning pope, for embracing William's quarrel, that he alone had made an appeal to his tribunal, and rendered him umpire of the diſpute between him and Harold; but there were other advantages, which, that pontiff foreſaw, muſt reſult from the conqueſt of England by the Norman arms. That kingdom, though at firſt converted by Romiſh miſſionaries, though it had afterwards advanced ſome farther ſteps towards ſubjection to Rome, maintained ſtill a conſiderable independance in its eccleſiaſtical adminiſtration; and forming a world within itſelf, entirely ſeparated from the reſt of Europe, it had hitherto proved inacceſſible to thoſe exorbitant claims, which ſupported the grandeur of the papacy. Alexander, therefore, hoped, that the French and Norman barons, if ſucceſsful in their enterprize, might import into that country a more devoted reverence to the holy ſee, and bring the Engliſh churches to a nearer conformity with thoſe of the continent. He declared immediately in

[c] Gul. Pict. p. 198.

favour

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favour of William's claim; pronounced Harold a perjured uſurper; denounced excommunication againſt him and his adherents; and the more to encourage the duke of Normandy in his enterprize, he ſent him a conſecrated banner, and a ring with one of St. Peter's hairs in it [d]. Thus were all the ambition and violence of that invaſion covered over ſafely with the broad mantle of religion.

THE greateſt difficulty, which William had to encounter in his preparations, aroſe from his own ſubjects in Normandy. The ſtates of the dutchy were aſſembled at Liſlebonne; and ſupplies being demanded for the intended enterprize, which promiſed ſo much glory and advantage to their country, there appeared a reluctance in many members, both to grant ſums ſo much beyond the common meaſure of taxes in that age, and to ſet a precedent of performing their military ſervice at a diſtance from their own country. The duke, finding it dangerous to ſolicit them in a body, conferred ſeparately with the richeſt perſons in the province; and beginning with thoſe whoſe affections he moſt relied on, he gradually engaged all of them to advance the ſums demanded. The count of Longueville ſeconded him in this negotiation; as did the count of Mortaigne, Odo biſhop of Baieux, and eſpecially William Fitz-Oſborne, count of Breteüil, and conſtable of the dutchy. Every perſon, when he himſelf was once engaged, endeavoured to bring over others; and at laſt the ſtates themſelves, after ſtipulating that this conceſſion ſhould be no precedent, voted, that they would aſſiſt their prince to the utmoſt in his intended enterprize [e].

WILLIAM had now aſſembled a fleet of 3000 veſſels, great and ſmall [f], and had ſelected an army of 60,000

[d] Baker, p. 22. edit. 1684. Camden. Introd. ad Britann. p. 212. 2d edit. Gibſ. Verſtegan, p. 173. [e] Gul. Gemet. lib. 7. cap. 34. [f]

men

men from among thoſe numerous ſupplies, which from every quarter ſolicited to be received into his ſervice. The camp bore a ſplendid, yet a martial appearance, from the diſcipline of the men, the vigor of the horſes, the luſtre of the arms, and accoutrements of both; but above all, from the high names of nobility who engaged under the banners of the duke of Normandy. The moſt celebrated were Euſtace, count of Boulogne, Aimeri de Thouars, Hugh d'Eſtaples, William d'Evreux, Geoffrey de Rotrou, Roger de Beaumont, William de Warenne, Roger de Montgomeri, Hugh de Grantmeſnil, Charles Martel, and Geoffrey Giffard [g]. To theſe bold chieftains William held up the ſpoils of England as the prize of their valour; and pointing to the oppoſite ſhore, called to them, that *there* was the field, on which they muſt erect trophies to their name, and fix their eſtabliſhments. CHAP. III.

WHILE he was making theſe mighty preparations, the duke, that he might encreaſe the number of Harold's enemies, excited the inveterate rancour of Toſti, and encouraged him, in concert with Harold Halfager, king of Norway, to infeſt the coaſts of England. Toſti, having collected about ſixty veſſels in the ports of Flanders, put to ſea; and after committing ſome depredations on the ſouth and eaſt coaſts, he ſailed to Northumberland, and was there joined by Halfager, who came over with a great armament of three hundred ſail. The combined fleets entered the Humber, and diſembarked the troops, who began to extend their depredations on all ſides; when Morcar earl of Northumberland, and Edwin earl of Mercia, the king's brothers-in-law, having haſtily collected ſome forces, ventured to give them battle. The action ended in the defeat and flight of theſe two noblemen.

[g] Ordericus Vitalis, p. 501.

HAROLD,

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HAROLD, informed of this defeat, haſtened with an army to the protection of his people; and expreſſed the utmoſt ardour to ſhow himſelf worthy of the crown, which had been conferred upon him. This prince, though he was not ſenſible of the full extent of his danger, from the great combination againſt him, had employed every art of popularity to acquire the affections of the public; and he gave ſo many proofs of an equitable and prudent adminiſtration, that the Engliſh found no reaſon to repent the choice which they had made of a ſovereign. They flocked from all quarters to join his ſtandard; and as ſoon as he reached the enemy at Standford, he found himſelf in a condition to give them battle. The action was bloody; but the victory was deciſive on the ſide of Harold, and ended in the total rout of the Norvegians, together with the death of Toſti and Halfager. Even the Norvegian fleet fell into the hands of Harold; who had the generoſity to give prince Olave, the ſon of Halfager, his liberty, and allow him to depart with twenty veſſels. But he had ſcarcely time to rejoice for this victory, when he received intelligence, that the duke of Normandy was landed with a great army in the ſouth of England.

September 25.

THE Norman fleet and army had been aſſembled, early in the ſummer, at the mouth of the ſmall river Dive, and all the troops had been inſtantly embarked; but the winds proved long contrary, and detained them in that harbour. The authority, however, of the duke, the good diſcipline maintained among the ſeamen and ſoldiers, and the great care of ſupplying them with proviſions, had prevented any diſorder; when at laſt the wind became favourable, and enabled them to ſail along the coaſt, till they reached St. Valori. There were, however, ſeveral veſſels loſt in this ſhort paſſage; and as the winds again proved contrary, the army began to imagine, that heaven had

had declared againſt them, and that, notwithſtanding the pope's benediction, they were deſtined to certain deſtruction. Theſe bold warriors, who deſpiſed real dangers, were very ſubject to the dread of imaginary ones; and many of them began to mutiny, ſome of them even to deſert their colours; when the duke, in order to ſupport their drooping hopes, ordered a proceſſion to be made with the reliques of St. Valori [h], and prayers to be ſaid for more favourable weather. The wind inſtantly changed; and as this incident happened on the eve of the feaſt of St. Michael, the tutelar ſaint of Normandy, the ſoldiers, fancying they ſaw the hand of heaven in all theſe concurring circumſtances, ſet out with the greateſt alacrity: They met with no oppoſition on their paſſage: A great fleet, which Harold had aſſembled, and which had cruized all ſummer off the Iſle of Wight, had been diſmiſſed, on his receiving falſe intelligence, that William, diſcouraged by contrary winds and other accidents, had laid aſide his preparations. The Norman armament, proceeding in great order, arrived, without any material loſs, at Pevenſey in Suſſex; and the army quietly diſembarked. The duke himſelf, as he leaped on ſhore, happened to ſtumble and fall; but had the preſence of mind to turn the omen to his advantage, by calling aloud, that he had taken poſſeſſion of the country. And a ſoldier, running to a neighbouring cottage, plucked ſome thatch, which, as if giving him ſeizine of the kingdom, he preſented to his general. The joy and alacrity of William and his whole army was ſo great, that they were nowiſe diſcouraged, even when they heard of Harold's great victory over the Norvegians: They ſeemed rather to wait with impatience the arrival of the enemy.

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THE victory of Harold, though great and honourable, had proved in the main prejudicial to his intereſts, and

[h] Higden, p. 285. Order. Vitalis, p. 500. Matth. Paris, edit. Pariſis anno 1644. p. 2.

may

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may be regarded as the immediate cauſe of his ruin. He loſt many of his braveſt officers and ſoldiers in the action; and he diſguſted the reſt, by refuſing to diſtribute the Norvegian ſpoils among them: A conduct which was little agreeable to his uſual generoſity of temper; but which his deſire of ſparing the people, in the war that impended over him from the duke of Normandy, had probably occaſioned. He haſtened by quick marches to reach this new invader; but though he was reinforced at London and other places with freſh troops, he found himſelf alſo weakened by the deſertion of his old ſoldiers, who from fatigue and diſcontent ſecretly withdrew from their colours. His brother Gurth, a man of bravery and conduct, began to entertain apprehenſions of the event; and remonſtrated with the king, that it would be better policy to prolong the war, or at leaſt, to ſpare his own perſon in the action. He urged to him, that the deſperate ſituation of the duke of Normandy made it requiſite for that prince to bring matters to a ſpeedy deciſion, and put his whole fortune on the iſſue of a battle; but that the king of England, in his own country, beloved by his ſubjects, provided with every ſupply, had more certain and leſs dangerous means of enſuring to himſelf the victory: That the Norman troops, elevated on the one hand with the higheſt hopes, and ſeeing, on the other, no reſource in caſe of a diſcomfiture, would fight to the laſt extremity; and being the flower of all the warriors of the continent, muſt be regarded as formidable to the Engliſh: That if their firſt fire and ſpirit, which is always moſt dangerous, were allowed to languiſh for want of action; if they were haraſſed with ſmall ſkirmiſhes, ſtraitened in proviſions, and fatigued with the bad weather and deep roads during the winter-ſeaſon, which was approaching, they muſt fall an eaſy and a bloodleſs prey to their enemy: That if a general action were delayed, the Engliſh, ſenſible

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sible of the imminent denger, to which their properties, as well as liberties, were exposed from these rapacious invaders, would hasten from all quarters to his assistance, and would render his army invincible: That, at least, if he thought it necessary to hazard a battle, he ought not to expose his own person; but reserve, in case of disastrous accidents, some resource to the liberty and independance of the kingdom: And that having once been so unfortunate, as to be constrained to swear, and that upon the holy reliques, to support the pretensions of the duke of Normandy, it were better that the command of the army should be entrusted to another, who, not being bound by those sacred ties, might give the soldiers more assured hopes of a prosperous issue to the quarrel.

HAROLD was deaf to all these remonstrances: Elated with his past prosperity, as well as stimulated by his native courage, he resolved to give battle in person; and for that purpose, he drew near to the Normans, who had removed their camp and fleet to Hastings, where they fixed their quarters. He was so confident of success, that he sent a message to the duke, promising him a sum of money, if he would depart the kingdom without effusion of blood: But his offer was rejected with disdain; and William, not to be behind with his enemy in vaunting, sent him a message by some monks, requiring him either to resign the kingdom, or to hold it of him in fealty, or to submit their cause to the arbitration of the pope, or to fight him in single combat. Harold replied, that the God of battles would soon be the arbiter of all their differences [i].

THE English and Normans now prepared themselves for this important decision; but the aspect of things, on the night before the battle, was very different in the two 13th October.

[i] Higden, p. 286.

camps.

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camps. The Engliſh ſpent the time in riot, and jollity, and diſorder; the Normans in ſilence, and in prayer, and in the other functions of their religion [k]. On the morning, the duke called together the moſt conſiderable of his commanders, and made them a ſpeech ſuitable to the occaſion. He repreſented to them, that the event, which they and he had long wiſhed for, was approaching; the whole fortune of the war now depended on their ſwords, and would be decided in a ſingle action: That never army had greater motives for exerting a vigorous courage, whether they conſidered the prize which would attend their victory, or the inevitable deſtruction which muſt enſue upon their diſcomfiture: That if their martial and veteran bands could once break thoſe raw ſoldiers, who had raſhly dared to approach them, they conquered a kingdom at one blow, and were juſtly entitled to all its poſſeſſions as the reward of their proſperous valour: That, on the contrary, if they remitted in the leaſt their wonted proweſs, an enraged enemy hung upon their rear, the ſea met them in their retreat, and an ignominious death was the certain puniſhment of their imprudent cowardice: That by collecting ſo numerous and brave a hoſt, he had enſured every human means of conqueſt; and the commander of the enemy, by his criminal conduct, had given him juſt cauſe to hope for the favour of the Almighty, in whoſe hands alone lay the event of wars and battles: And that a perjured uſurper, anathematized by the ſovereign pontiff, and conſcious of his own breach of faith, would be ſtruck with terror on their appearance, and would prognoſticate to himſelf that fate which his multiplied crimes had ſo juſtly merited [l]. The duke next divided his army into three lines: The firſt, headed by Montgomery, conſiſted of archers and light armed infantry:

[k] W. Malm. p. 101. De Geſt. Angl. p. 332. Brompton, p. 959. Gul. Pict. p. 201.

[l] H. Hunt. p. 368.

The

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The second, commanded by Martel, was composed of his bravest battalions, heavy armed, and ranged in close order: His cavalry, at whose head he placed himself, formed the third line; and were so disposed, that they stretched beyond the infantry, and flanked each wing of the army [m]. He ordered the signal of battle to be given; and the whole army, moving at once, and singing the hymn or song of Roland, the famous peer of Charlemagne [n], advanced, in order and with alacrity, towards the enemy.

HAROLD had seized the advantage of a rising ground, and having likewise drawn some trenches to secure his flanks, he resolved to stand upon the defensive, and to avoid all action with the cavalry, in which he was inferior. The Kentish men were placed in the van; a post which they had always claimed as their due: The Londoners guarded the standard: And the king himself, accompanied by his two valiant brothers, Gurth and Leofwin, dismounting, placed himself at the head of his infantry, and expressed his resolution to conquer or to perish in the action. The first attack of the Normans was desperate, but was received with equal valour by the English; and after a furious combat, which remained long undecided, the former, overcome by the difficulty of the ground, and hard pressed by the enemy, began first to relax their vigour, then to retreat; and confusion was spreading among the ranks; when William, who found himself on the brink of destruction, hastened with a select band, to the relief of his dismayed forces. His presence restored the action; the English were obliged to retire with loss; and the duke ordering his second line to advance, renewed the attack with fresh forces and with redoubled courage. Finding, that the enemy, aided by

[m] Gul. Pict. 201. Order. Vital. p. 501. [n] W. Malm. p. 101. Higden, p. 286. Matth. West. p. 223. Du Cange's Glossary in verbo *Cantilena Rolandi*.

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the advantage of ground, and animated by the example of their prince, ſtill made a vigorous reſiſtance, he tried a ſtratagem, which was very delicate in its management, but which ſeemed adviſeable in his deſperate ſituation, where, if he gained not a deciſive victory, he was totally undone: He commanded his troops to make a haſty retreat, and to allure the enemy from their ground by the appearance of flight. The artifice ſucceeded againſt theſe unexperienced ſoldiers, who, heated by the action and ſanguine in their hopes, precipitately followed the Normans into the plain. William gave orders, that at once the infantry ſhould face about upon their purſuers, and the cavalry make an aſſault upon their wings, and both of them purſue the advantage, which the ſurprize and terror of the enemy muſt give them in that critical and deciſive moment. The Engliſh were repulſed with great ſlaughter, and driven back to the hill; where, being rallied again by the bravery of Harold, they were able, notwithſtanding their loſs, to maintain the poſt and continue the combat. The duke tried the ſame ſtratagem a ſecond time with the ſame ſucceſs; but even after this double advantage, he ſtill found a great body of the Engliſh, who, maintaining themſelves in firm array, ſeemed determined to diſpute the victory to the laſt extremity. He ordered his heavy armed infantry to make an aſſault upon them; while his archers, placed behind, ſhould gall the enemy, who were expoſed by the ſituation of the ground, and who were intent in defending themſelves againſt the ſwords and ſpears of the aſſailants. By this diſpoſition he at laſt prevailed: Harold was ſlain by an arrow, while he was combating with great bravery at the head of his men: His two brothers ſhared the ſame fate: And the Engliſh, diſcouraged by the fall of thoſe princes, gave ground on all ſides, and were purſued with great ſlaughter by the victorious Normans. A few troops however of

of the vanquiſhed had ſtill the courage to turn upon their purſuers; and attacking them in deep and miry ground, obtained ſome revenge for the ſlaughter and diſhonour of the day. But the appearance of the duke obliged them to ſeek their ſafety by flight; and darkneſs ſaved them from any farther purſuit by the enemy. CHAP. III.

THUS was gained by William, duke of Normandy, the great and deciſive victory of Haſtings, after a battle which was fought from morning till ſunſet, and which ſeemed worthy, by the heroic feats of valour diſplayed by both armies and by both commanders, to decide the fate of a mighty kingdom. William had three horſes killed under him; and there fell near fifteen thouſand men on the ſide of the Normans: The loſs was ſtill more conſiderable on that of the vanquiſhed; beſides the death of the king and his two brothers. The dead body of Harold was brought to William, and was generouſly reſtored without ranſom to his mother. The Norman army left not the field of battle without giving thanks to heaven, in the moſt ſolemn manner, for their victory: And the prince, having refreſhed his troops, prepared to puſh to the utmoſt his advantage againſt the divided, diſmayed, and diſcomfited Engliſh.

APPENDIX I.

The ANGLO-SAXON GOVERNMENT and MANNERS.

First Saxon government——Succeſſion of the Kings——The Wittenagemot——The ariſtocracy——The ſeveral orders of men——Courts of juſtice——Criminal law——Rules of proof——Military force——Public revenue——Value of money——Manners.

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THE government of the Germans, and that of all the northern nations, who eſtabliſhed themſelves on the ruins of Rome, was always extremely free; and thoſe fierce people, accuſtomed to independance and enured to arms, were more guided by perſuaſion than authority, in the ſubmiſſion which they paid to their princes. The military deſpotiſm, which had taken place in the Roman empire, and which, previouſly to the irruption of thoſe conquerors, had ſunk the genius of men, and deſtroyed every noble principle of ſcience and virtue, was unable to reſiſt the vigorous efforts of a free people; and Europe, as from a new epoch, rekindled her ancient ſpirit, and ſhook off the baſe ſervitude to arbitrary will and authority, under which ſhe had ſo long laboured. The free conſtitutions then eſtabliſhed, however impaired by the encroachments of ſucceeding princes, ſtill preſerve an air of independance and legal adminiſtration, which diſtinguiſh the

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European nations; and if that part of the globe maintain sentiments of liberty, honour, equity, and valour superior to the rest of mankind, it owes these advantages chiefly to the seeds implanted by those generous barbarians.

First Saxon government.

The Saxons, who subdued Britain, as they enjoyed great liberty in their own country, obstinately retained that invaluable possession in their new settlement; and they imported into this island the same principles of independance, which they had inherited from their ancestors. The chieftains (for such they were, more properly than kings or princes) who commanded them in those military expeditions, still possessed a very limited authority; and as the Saxons exterminated, rather than subdued the ancient inhabitants, they were indeed transplanted into a new territory, but preserved unaltered all their civil and military institutions. The language was pure Saxon; even the names of places, which often remain while the tongue entirely changes, were almost all affixed by the new conquerors; the manners and customs were wholly German; and the same picture of a fierce and bold liberty, which is drawn by the masterly pencil of Tacitus, will suit those founders of the English government. The king, so far from being invested with arbitrary power, was only considered as the first among the citizens; his authority depended more on his personal qualities than on his station; he was even so far on a level with the people, that a stated price was fixed for his head, and a legal fine was levied upon his murderer, which, though proportioned to his station, and superior to that paid for the life of a subject, was a sensible mark of his subordination to the community.

Succession of the kings.

It is easy to imagine, that an independant people, so little restrained by laws, and cultivated by science, would not

not be very ſtrict in maintaining a regular ſucceſſion of their princes. Though they paid great regard to the royal family, and aſcribed to it an undiſputed ſuperiority, they either had no rule, or none that was ſteadily obſerved, in filling the vacant throne; and preſent convenience, in that emergency, was more attended to than general principles. We are not however to ſuppoſe, that the crown was conſidered as altogether elective; and that a regular plan was traced by the conſtitution for ſupplying, by the ſuffrages of the people, every vacancy made by the demiſe of the firſt magiſtrate. If any king left a ſon of an age and capacity fit for government, the young prince naturally ſtepped into the throne: If he was a minor, his uncle, or the next prince of the blood, was promoted to the government, and left the ſceptre to his poſterity: Any ſovereign, by taking previous meaſures with the leading men, had it greatly in his power to appoint his ſucceſſor: All theſe changes, and indeed the ordinary adminiſtration of government, required the expreſs concurrence, or at leaſt the tacit acquieſcence of the people; but poſſeſſion, however obtained, was extremely apt to ſecure their obedience, and the idea of any right, which was once excluded, was but feeble and imperfect. This is ſo much the caſe in all barbarous monarchies, and occurs ſo often in the hiſtory of the Anglo-Saxons, that we cannot conſiſtently entertain any other notion of their government. The idea of an hereditary ſucceſſion in authority is ſo natural to men, and is ſo much fortified by the uſual rule in tranſmitting private poſſeſſions, that it muſt retain a great influence on every ſociety, which does not exclude it by the refinements of a republican conſtitution. But as there is a material difference between government and private poſſeſſions, and every man is not as much qualified for exerciſing the one, as for enjoying the other, a people, who

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are not ſenſible of the general advantages attending a fixed rule, are apt to make great leaps in the ſucceſſion, and frequently to paſs over the perſon, who, had he poſſeſſed the requiſite years and abilities, would have been thought entitled to the ſovereignty. Thus, theſe monarchies are not, ſtrictly ſpeaking, either elective or hereditary; and though the deſtination of a prince may often be followed in appointing his ſucceſſor, they can as little be regarded as wholly teſtamentary. The ſuffrages of the ſtates may ſometimes eſtabliſh a ſovereign; but they more frequently recognize the perſon, whom they find eſtabliſhed: A few great men take the lead; the people, overawed and influenced, acquieſce in the government; and the reigning prince, provided he be of the royal family, paſſes undiſputably for the legal ſovereign.

The Witenagemot.

It is confeſſed, that our knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon hiſtory and antiquities is too imperfect to afford us means of determining with certainty all the prerogatives of the crown and privileges of the people, or of giving an exact delineation of that government. It is probable alſo, that the conſtitution might be ſomewhat different in the different kingdoms of the Heptarchy, and that it changed conſiderably during the courſe of ſix centuries, which elapſed from the firſt invaſion of the Saxons till the Norman conqueſt [o]. But moſt of theſe differences and changes, with their cauſes and effects, are unknown to us: It only appears, that, at all times, and in all the

[o] We know of one change, not inconſiderable in the Saxon conſtitution. The Saxon Annals, p. 49. inform us, that it was in early times the prerogative of the king to name the dukes, earls, aldermen and ſheriffs of the counties. Aſſer, a contemporary writer, informs us, that Alfred depoſed all the ignorant aldermen, and appointed men of more capacity in their place: Yet the laws of Edward the Confeſſor, § 35. ſay expreſsly, that the heretoghs or dukes, and the ſheriffs, were choſen by the freeholders in the folkmote; a county court, which was aſſembled once a-year, and where all the freeholders ſwore allegiance to the king.

kingdoms,

kingdoms, there was a national council, called a Wittenagemot or aſſembly of the wiſe men, (for that is the import of the term) whoſe conſent was requiſite for enacting laws, and for ratifying the chief acts of public adminiſtration. The preambles to all the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, Alfred, Edward the Elder, Athelſtan, Edmond, Edgar, Ethelred, and Edward the Confeſſor; even thoſe to the laws of Canute, though a kind of conqueror, put this matter beyond controverſy, and carry proofs every where of a limited and legal government. But who were the conſtituent members of this Wittenagemot has not been determined with certainty by antiquaries. It is agreed, that the biſhops and abbots [p] were an eſſential part; and it is alſo evident, from the tenor of thoſe ancient laws, that the Wittenagemot enacted ſtatutes which regulated the eccleſiaſtical as well as civil government, and that thoſe dangerous principles, by which the church is totally ſevered from the ſtate, were hitherto unknown to the Anglo-Saxons [q]. It alſo appears, that the aldermen or governors of counties, who, after the Daniſh times, were often called earls *, were admitted into this council, and gave their conſent to the public ſtatutes. But beſides the prelates and aldermen, there is alſo mention of the wites or wiſe-men, as a component part of the Wittenagemot; but who *theſe* were, is not ſo clearly aſcertained by the laws or the hiſtory of that period. The matter would probably be of difficult diſcuſſion, even were it examined impartially; but as our modern parties have choſen to divide on this point, the queſtion has been diſputed with the greater obſtinacy, and the arguments on both ſides have become, on that account, the more captious and deceitful. Our monarchical faction maintain, that theſe *wites* or *ſapientes*

[p] Sometimes abbeſſes were admitted; at leaſt, they often ſign the king's charters or grants. Speilm. Gloſſ. in verbo *parliamentum*.

[q] Wilkins paſſim.

* See note [G] at the end of the volume.

Were

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were the judges, or men learned in the law: The popular faction aſſert them to be repreſentatives of the boroughs, or what we now call the commons.

The expreſſions, employed by all ancient hiſtorians in mentioning the Wittenagemot, ſeem to contradict the latter ſuppoſition. The members are almoſt always called the *principes*, *ſatrapæ*, *optimates*, *magnates*, *proceres*; terms which ſeem to ſuppoſe an ariſtocracy, and to exclude the commons. The boroughs alſo, from the low ſtate of commerce, were ſo ſmall and ſo poor, and the inhabitants lived in ſuch dependance on the great men [r], that it ſeems nowiſe probable they would be admitted as a part of the national councils. The commons are well known to have had no ſhare in the governments eſtabliſhed by the Franks, Burgundians, and other northern nations; and we may conclude, that the Saxons, who remained longer barbarous and uncivilized than thoſe tribes, would never think of conferring ſuch an extraordinary privilege on trade and induſtry. The military profeſſion alone was honourable among all thoſe conquerors: The warriors ſubſiſted by their poſſeſſions in land: They became conſiderable by their influence over their vaſſals, retainers, tenants, and ſlaves: And it demands ſtrong proof to convince us that they would admit any of a rank ſo much inferior as the burgeſſes, to ſhare with them in the legiſlative authority. Tacitus indeed affirms, that, among the ancient Germans, the conſent of all the members of the community was required in every important deliberation; but he ſpeaks not of repreſentatives; and this ancient practice, mentioned by the Roman hiſtorian, could only have place in ſmall tribes, where every citizen might without inconvenience be aſſembled upon any extraordinary emergency. After principalities became extenſive; after the difference of property had formed diſtinctions more im-

[r] Brady's treatiſe of Engliſh boroughs, p. 3, 4, 5, &c.

portant than thoſe which aroſe from perſonal ſtrength and valour; we may conclude, that the national aſſemblies muſt have been more limited in their number, and compoſed only of the more conſiderable citizens. Appendix I.

But though we muſt exclude the burgeſſes or commons from the Saxon Wittenagemot, there is ſome neceſſity for ſuppoſing, that this aſſembly conſiſted of other members than the prelates, abbots, aldermen, and the judges or privy council. For as all theſe, excepting ſome of the eccleſiaſtics [s], were anciently appointed by the king, had there been no other legiſlative authority, the royal power had been in a great meaſure abſolute, contrary to the tenor of all the hiſtorians, and to the practice of all the northern nations. We may, therefore, conclude, that the more conſiderable proprietors of land were, without any election, conſtituent members of the national aſſembly: There is reaſon to think, that forty hydes, or between four and five thouſand acres, was the eſtate requiſite for entitling the poſſeſſor to this honourable privilege. We find a paſſage in an ancient author [t] by which it appears, that a perſon of very noble birth, even one allied to the crown, was not eſteemed a *princeps* (the term uſually employed by ancient hiſtorians when the Wittenagemot is mentioned) till he had acquired a fortune of that amount. Nor need we imagine, that the public council would become diſorderly or confuſed by admitting ſo great a multitude. The landed property of England was probably in few hands during the Saxon times; at

[s] There is ſome reaſon to think, that the biſhops were ſometimes choſen by the Wittenagemot, and confirmed by the king. Eddius, cap. 2. The abbots in the monaſteries of the royal foundation were anciently named by the king; though Edgar gave the monks the election, and only reſerved to himſelf the ratification. This deſtination was afterwards frequently violated; and the abbots as well as biſhops were afterwards all appointed by the king; as we learn from Ingulf, a writer contemporary to the conqueſt.

[t] Hiſt. Elienſis, lib. 2. cap. 40.

leaſt,

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least, during the later part of that period: And as men had hardly any ambition to attend these public councils, there was no danger of the assembly's becoming too numerous for the dispatch of the little business, which was brought before them.

The aristocracy.

It is certain, that, whatever we may determine concerning the constituent members of the Wittenagemot, in whom, with the king, the legislature resided, the Anglo-Saxon government, in the period preceding the Norman conquest, was become extremely aristocratical: The royal authority was very limited; the people, even if admitted to that assembly, were of little or no weight and consideration. We have hints given us in historians of the great power and riches of particular noblemen: And it could not but happen, after the abolition of the Heptarchy, when the king lived at a distance from the provinces, that these great proprietors, who resided on their estates, would much augment their authority over their vassals and retainers, and over all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Hence the immeasurable power assumed by Harold, Godwin, Leofric, Siward, Morcar, Edwin, Edric and Alfric, who controlled the authority of the kings, and rendered themselves quite necessary in the government. The two latter, though detested by the people, on account of their joining a foreign enemy, still preserved their power and influence; and we may therefore conclude, that their authority was founded, not on popularity, but on family rights and possessions. There is one Athelstan, mentioned in the reign of the king of that name, who is called alderman of all England, and is said to be half-king; though the monarch himself was a prince of valour and ability [a]. And we find, that in the later Saxon times, and in these alone, the great offices went

[a] Hist. Ramef. § 3. p. 387.

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from father to ſon, and became, in a manner, hereditary in the families [w].

THE circumſtances, attending the invaſions of the Danes, would alſo ſerve much to encreaſe the power of the principal nobility. Thoſe free-booters made unexpected inroads on all quarters; and there was a neceſſity, that each county ſhould reſiſt them by its own force, and under the conduct of its own magiſtrates and nobility. For the ſame reaſon, that a general war, managed by the united efforts of the whole ſtate, commonly augments the power of the crown; thoſe private wars and inroads turned to the advantage of the aldermen and nobles.

AMONG that military and turbulent people, ſo averſe to commerce and the arts, and ſo little enured to induſtry, juſtice was commonly very ill executed, and great oppreſſion and violence ſeem to have prevailed. Theſe diſorders would be encreaſed by the exorbitant power of the ariſtocracy; and would, in their turn, contribute to encreaſe it. Men, not daring to rely on the guardianſhip of the laws, were obliged to devote themſelves to the ſervice of ſome chieftain, whoſe orders they followed even to the diſturbance of the government or the injury of their fellow-citizens, and who afforded them in return protection from any inſult or injuſtice by ſtrangers. Hence we find, by the extracts which Dr. Brady has given us from Domeſday, that almoſt all the inhabitants even of towns, had placed themſelves under the clientſhip of ſome particular nobleman, whoſe patronage they purchaſed by annual payments, and whom they were obliged to conſider as their ſovereign, more than the king himſelf, or even

[w] Roger Hoveden, giving the reaſon why William the Conqueror made Coſpatric earl of Northumberland, ſays, *Nam ex materno ſanguine attinebat ad eum honor illius comitatus. Erat enim ex matra Algitha, filia Uthredi comitis.* See alſo Sim. Dun. p. 205. We ſee in thoſe inſtances, the ſame tendency towards rendering offices hereditary, which took place, during a more early period, on the continent; and which had already produced there its full effect.

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the legiſlature [x]. A client, though a freeman, was ſuppoſed ſo much to belong to his patron, that his murderer was obliged by law to pay a fine to the latter, as a compenſation for his loſs; in like manner as he paid a fine to the maſter for the murder of his ſlave [y]. Men, who were of a more conſiderable rank, but not powerful enough, each to ſupport himſelf by his own independent authority, entered into formal confederacies together, and compoſed a kind of ſeparate community, which rendered itſelf formidable to all aggreſſors. Dr. Hickes has preſerved a curious Saxon bond of this kind, which he calls a *Sodalitium*, and which contains many particulars characteriſtical of the manners and cuſtoms of the times [z]. All the aſſociates are there ſaid to be gentlemen of Cambridgeſhire; and they ſwear before the holy reliques to obſerve their confederacy, and to be faithful to each other: They promiſe to bury any of the aſſociates who dies, in whatever place he had appointed; to contribute to his funeral charges; and to attend at his interment; and whoever is wanting to this laſt duty, binds himſelf to pay a meaſure of honey. When any of the aſſociates is in danger, and calls for the aſſiſtance of his fellows, they promiſe, beſides flying to his ſuccour, to give information to the ſheriff; and if he be negligent in protecting the perſon expoſed to danger, they engage to levy a fine of one pound upon him: If the preſident of the ſociety himſelf be wanting in this particular, he binds himſelf to pay one pound; unleſs he has the reaſonable excuſe of ſickneſs, or of duty to his ſuperior. When any of the aſſociates is murdered, they are to exact eight pounds from the murderer; and if he refuſe to pay it, they are to proſecute him for the ſum at their joint expence. If any of the aſſociates, who happens to be poor, kill a man, the ſociety

[x] Brady's treatiſe of boroughs, 3, 4, 5, &c. The caſe was the ſame with the freemen in the country. See pref. to his hiſt. p. 8, 9, 10, &c.

[y] LL. Edw. Conf. § 8, apud Ingulf. [z] Diſſert. Epiſt. p. 27.

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are to contribute by a certain proportion to pay his fine: A mark a-piece, if the fine be 700 ſhillings; leſs if the perſon killed be a clown or ceorle; the half of that ſum, again, if he be a Welſhman. But where any of the aſſociates kills a man, wilfully and without provocation, he muſt himſelf pay the fine. If any of the aſſociates kill any of his fellows, in a like criminal manner, beſides paying the uſual fine to the relations of the deceaſed, he muſt pay eight pounds to the ſociety, or renounce the benefit of it: In which caſe they bind themſelves, under the penalty of one pound, never to eat or drink with him, except in the preſence of the king, biſhop, or alderman. There are other regulations to protect themſelves and their ſervants from all injuries, to revenge ſuch as are committed, and to prevent their giving abuſive language to each other; and the fine, which they engage to pay for this laſt offence, is a meaſure of honey.

It is not to be doubted, but a confederacy of this kind muſt have been a great ſource of friendſhip and attachment; when men lived in perpetual danger from enemies, robbers, and oppreſſors, and received protection chiefly from their perſonal valour, and from the aſſiſtance of their friends or patrons. As animoſities were then more violent, connexions were alſo more intimate, whether voluntary or derived from blood: The moſt remote degree of propinquity was regarded: An indelible memory of benefits was preſerved: Severe vengeance was taken for injuries, both from a point of honour, and as the beſt means of future ſecurity: And the civil union being weak, many private engagements were contracted, in order to ſupply its place, and to procure men that ſafety, which the laws and their own innocence were not alone able to inſure to them.

On the whole, notwithſtanding the ſeeming liberty or rather licentiouſneſs of the Anglo-Saxons, the great body even

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even of the free citizens, in thoſe ages, really enjoyed much leſs true liberty, than where the execution of the laws is the moſt ſevere, and where ſubjects are reduced to the ſtricteſt ſubordination and dependance on the civil magiſtrate. The reaſon is derived from the exceſs itſelf of that liberty. Men muſt guard themſelves at any price againſt inſults and injuries; and where they receive not protection from the laws and magiſtrate, they will ſeek it by ſubmiſſion to ſuperiors, and by herding in ſome private confederacy, which acts under the direction of a powerful leader. And thus all anarchy is the immediate cauſe of tyranny, if not over the ſtate, at leaſt over many of the individuals.

The ſeveral orders of men.

THE German Saxons, as the other nations of that continent, were divided into three ranks of men, the noble, the free, and the ſlaves [a]. This diſtinction they brought over with them into Britain.

THE nobles were called thanes; and were of two kinds, the king's thanes and leſſer thanes. The latter ſeem to have been dependant on the former; and to have received lands, for which they paid rent, ſervices, or attendance in peace and war [b]. We know of no title, which raiſed any one to the rank of thane, except noble birth and the poſſeſſion of land. The former was always much regarded by all the German nations even in their moſt barbarous ſtate; and as the Saxon nobility had few expenſive pleaſures to diſſipate their fortune, and the commons little trade or induſtry by which they could accumulate riches, theſe two ranks of men, even though they were not ſeparated by poſitive laws, might remain long diſtinct, and the noble families continue many ages in opulence and ſplendor. There were no middle rank of men, that could gradually mix with their ſuperiors, and inſenſibly procure to themſelves honour and diſtinction. If by any extraordinary accident, a mean perſon acquired

[a] Nithard. hiſt. lib. 4. [b] Spelm. Feus and Tenures, p. 40.

riches,

riches, a circumſtance ſo ſingular made him be known and remarked; he became the object of envy, as well as of indignation, to all the nobles; he would have great difficulty to defend what he had acquired; and he would find it impoſſible to protect himſelf from oppreſſion, except by courting the patronage of ſome great chieftain, and paying a large price for his ſafety.

THERE are two ſtatutes among the Saxon laws, which ſeem calculated to confound thoſe different ranks of men; that of Athelſtan, by which a merchant, who had made three long ſea-voyages on his own account, was intitled to the quality of thane [c]; and that of the ſame prince, by which a ceorle or huſbandman, who had been able to purchaſe five hydes of land, and had a chapel, a kitchen, a hall, and a bell, was raiſed to the ſame diſtinction [d]. But the opportunities were ſo few, by which a merchant or ceorle could thus exalt himſelf above his rank, that the law could never overcome the reigning prejudices; the diſtinction between noble and baſe blood would ſtill be indelible; and the well-born thanes would entertain the higheſt contempt for thoſe legal and factitious ones. Though we are not informed of any of theſe circumſtances by ancient hiſtorians, they are ſo much founded on the nature of things, that we may admit them as a neceſſary and infallible conſequence of the ſituation of the kingdom during thoſe ages.

THE cities appear by Domeſday-book to have been at the conqueſt little better than villages [e]. York itſelf, though it was always the ſecond, at leaſt the third [f] city in

[c] Wilkins, p. 71. [d] Selden, Titles of honour, p. 515. Wilkins, p. 70.

[e] Winchester, being the capital of the Weſt Saxon monarchy, was anciently a conſiderable city. Gul. Pict. p. 210.

[f] Norwich contained 738 houſes, Exeter, 315, Ipſwich, 538, Northampton, 60, Hertford, 146, Canterbury, 262, Bath, 64, Southampton, 84,

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in England, and was the capital of a great province, which never was thoroughly united with the reſt, contained then but 1418 families [g]. Malmeſbury tells us [h], that the great diſtinction between the Anglo-Saxon nobility and the French or Norman, was that the latter built magnificent and ſtately caſtles; whereas the former conſumed their immenſe fortunes in riot and hoſpitality, and in mean houſes. We may thence infer, that the arts in general were much leſs advanced in England than in France; a greater number of idle ſervants and retainers lived about the great families; and as theſe, even in France, were powerful enough to diſturb the execution of the laws, we may judge of the authority, acquired by the ariſtocracy in England. When earl Godwin beſieged the Confeſſor in London, he ſummoned together from all parts his huſcarles, or houſeceorles and retainers, and thereby conſtrained his ſovereign to accept of the conditions, which he was pleaſed to impoſe upon him.

THE lower rank of freemen were denominated ceorles among the Anglo-Saxons; and where they were induſtrious, they were chiefly employed in huſbandry: Whence a ceorle, and a huſbandman, became in a manner ſynonimous terms. They cultivated the farms of the nobility or thanes, for which they paid rent; and they ſeem to have been removable at pleaſure. For there is little mention of leaſes among the Anglo-Saxons: The pride of the nobility, together with the general ignorance of writing, muſt have rendered thoſe contracts very rare, and muſt

Warwick, 113. See Brady of boroughs, p. 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. Theſe are the moſt conſiderable he mentions. The account of them is extracted from Domeſday-book.

[g] Brady's treatiſe of boroughs, p. 10. There were ſix wards, beſides the archbiſhop's palace; and five of theſe wards contained the number of families here mentioned, which at the rate of five perſons to a family makes about 7000 ſouls. The ſixth ward was laid waſte.

[h] P. 102. See alſo de Geſt. Angl. p. 333.

have

have kept the husbandmen in a dependant condition. The rents of farms were then chiefly paid in kind [i]. Appendix I.

But the most numerous rank by far in the community seems to have been the slaves or villains, who were the property of their lords, and were consequently incapable, themselves, of possessing any property. Dr. Brady assures us, from a survey of Domesday-book [k], that, in all the counties of England, the far greater part of the land was occupied by them, and that the husbandmen, and still more the socmen, who were tenants that could not be removed at pleasure, were very few in comparison. This was not the case with the German nations, as far as we can collect from the account given us by Tacitus. The perpetual wars in the heptarchy, and the depredations of the Danes, seem to have been the cause of this great alteration with the Anglo-Saxons. Prisoners taken in battle, or carried off in the frequent inroads, were reduced to slavery; and became, by right of war [l], entirely at the disposal of their lords. Great property in the nobles, especially if joined to an irregular administration of justice, naturally favours the power of the aristocracy; but still more so, if the practice of slavery be admitted, and has become very common. The nobility not only possess the influence which always attends riches, but also the power which the laws give them over their slaves and villains. It then becomes difficult, and almost impossible, for a private man to remain altogether free and independant.

There were two kinds of slaves among the Anglo-Saxons; household slaves, after the manner of the ancients, and prædial or rustic, after the manner of the

[i] LL. Inæ, § 70. These laws fixed the rents for a hyde; but it is difficult to convert it into modern measures. [k] General preface to his hist. p. 7, 8, 9, &c. [l] LL. Edg. § 14. apud Spellm. Conc. vol. i. p. 471.

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Germans [m]. These latter resembled the serfs, which are at present to be met with in Poland, Denmark, and some places in Germany. The power of a master over his slaves was not unlimited among the Anglo-Saxons, as it was among their ancestors. If a man beat out his slave's eye or teeth, the slave recovered his liberty [n]: If he killed him, he paid a fine to the king; provided the slave died within a day after the wound or blow: Otherwise it passed unpunished [o]. The selling of themselves or children into slavery was always the practice among the German nations [p], and was continued by the Anglo-Saxons [q].

THE great lords and abbots among the Anglo-Saxons possessed a criminal jurisdiction within their territories, and could punish without appeal any thieves or robbers whom they caught there [r]. This institution must have had a very contrary effect to that which was intended, and must have procured robbers a sure protection on the lands of such noblemen as did not sincerely mean to discourage crimes and violence.

Courts of justice.

BUT though the general strain of the Anglo-Saxon government seems to have become aristocratical, there were still considerable remains of the ancient democracy, which were not indeed sufficient to protect the lowest of the people, without the patronage of some great lord, but might give security, and even some degree of dignity, to the gentry or inferior nobility. The administration of justice, in particular, by the courts of the Decennary, the Hundred, and the County, were well calculated to defend general liberty, and to restrain the power of the nobles. In the county courts or shiremotes, all the freeholders were assembled twice a-year, and received appeals from

[m] Spellm. Gloss. in verb. *Servus*. [n] LL. Ælf. § 20.
[o] Ibid. § 17. [p] Tacit. de morib. Germ. [q] LL. Inæ, § 11. LL. Ælf. § 12. [r] Higden, lib. 1 cap. 50. LL. Edw. Conf. § 25. Spellm. Conc. vol. i. p. 415. Gloss. in verb. *Haligemot* et *Burgemotlefe*.

the inferior courts. They there decided all cauſes, eccleſiaſtical as well as civil; and the biſhop, together with the alderman or earl, preſided over them [s]. The affair was determined in a ſummary manner, without much pleading, formality, or delay, by a majority of voices; and the biſhop and alderman had no further authority than to keep order among the freeholders, and interpoſe with their opinion [t]. Where juſtice was denied during three ſeſſions by the Hundred, and then by the County court, there lay an appeal to the king's court [u]; but this was not practiſed on ſlight occaſions. The alderman received a third of the fines levied in thoſe courts [w]; and as moſt of the puniſhments were then pecuniary, this perquiſite formed a conſiderable part of the profits belonging to his office. The two thirds alſo, which went to the king, made no contemptible part of the public revenue. Any freeholder was fined who abſented himſelf thrice from theſe courts [x].

As the extreme ignorance of the age made deeds and writings very rare, the County or Hundred court was the place where the moſt remarkable civil tranſactions were finiſhed, in order to preſerve the memory of them, and prevent all future diſputes. Here teſtaments were promulgated, ſlaves manumitted, bargains of ſale concluded; and ſometimes, for greater ſecurity, the moſt conſiderable of theſe deeds were inſerted in the blank leaves of the pariſh Bible, which thus became a kind of regiſter, too ſacred to be falſified. It was not unuſual to add to the deed an imprecation on all ſuch as ſhould be guilty of that crime [y].

[s] LL Edg. § 5. Wilkins, p. 78. LL. Canut. § 17. Wilkins, p. 136.
[t] Hickes Diſſert. Epiſt. p. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. [u] LL. Edg. § 2. Wilkins, p. 77. LL. Canut. § 18. apud Wilkins, p. 136.
[w] LL. Edw. Conf. § 31. [x] LL. Ethelſt. § 20.
[y] Hickes Diſſert. Epiſt.

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AMONG a people, who lived in ſo ſimple a manner as the Anglo-Saxons, the judicial power is always of greater importance than the legiſlative. There were few or no taxes impoſed by the ſtates: There were few ſtatutes enacted; and the nation was leſs governed by laws, than by cuſtoms, which admitted a great latitude of interpretation. Though it ſhould, therefore, be allowed, that the Wittenagemot was altogether compoſed of the principal nobility, the county-courts, where all the freeholders were admitted, and which regulated all the daily occurrences of life, formed a wide baſis for the government, and were no contemptible checks on the ariſtocracy. But there is another power ſtill more important than either the judicial or legiſlative; to wit, the power of injuring or ſerving by immediate force and violence, for which it is difficult to obtain redreſs in courts of juſtice. In all extenſive governments, where the execution of the laws is feeble, this power naturally falls into the hands of the principal nobility; and the degree of it which prevails, cannot be determined ſo much by the public ſtatutes, as by ſmall incidents in hiſtory, by particular cuſtoms, and ſometimes by the reaſon and nature of things. The Highlands of Scotland have long been entitled by law to every privilege of Britiſh ſubjects; but it was not till very lately that the common people could in fact enjoy theſe privileges.

THE powers of all the members of the Anglo-Saxon government are diſputed among hiſtorians and antiquaries: The extreme obſcurity of the ſubject, even though faction had never entered into the queſtion, would naturally have begot thoſe controverſies. But the great influence of the lords over their ſlaves and tenants, the clientſhip of the burghers, the total want of a middling rank of men, the total want alſo of lawyers who did not then

form a ſeparate profeſſion, the extent of the monarchy, the looſe execution of the laws, the continued diſorders and convulſions of the ſtate; all theſe circumſtances evince, that the Anglo-Saxon government became at laſt extremely ariſtocratical; and the events, during the period immediately preceding the conqueſt, confirm this inference or conjecture. Appendix I.

Criminal law.

BOTH the puniſhments inflicted by the Anglo-Saxon courts of judicature, and the methods of proof employed in all cauſes, appear ſomewhat ſingular, and are very different from thoſe which prevail at preſent among all civilized nations.

WE muſt conceive, that the ancient Germans were little removed from the original ſtate of nature: The ſocial confederacy among them was more martial than civil: They had chiefly in view the means of attack or defence againſt public enemies, not thoſe of protection againſt their fellow-citizens: Their poſſeſſions were ſo ſlender and ſo equal, that they were not expoſed to great danger; and the natural bravery of the people made every man truſt to himſelf and to his particular friends for his defence or vengeance. This defect in the political union drew much cloſer the knot of particular confederacies: An inſult upon any man was regarded by all his relations and aſſociates as a common injury: They were bound by honour, as well as by a ſenſe of common intereſt, to revenge his death, or any violence which he had ſuffered: They retaliated on the aggreſſor by like acts of violence; and if he was protected, as was natural and uſual, by his own clan, the quarrel was ſpread ſtill wider, and bred endleſs diſorders in the nation.

THE Friſians, a tribe of the Germans, had never advanced beyond this wild and imperfect ſtate of ſociety; and the right of private revenge ſtill remained among

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them unlimited and uncontrouled [z]. But the other German nations, in the age of Tacitus, had made one ſtep farther towards completing the political or civil union. Though it ſtill continued to be an indiſpenſible point of honour for every clan to revenge the death or injury of their fellow, the magiſtrate had acquired a right of interpoſing in the quarrel, and of accommodating the difference. He obliged the perſon maimed or injured, and the relations of one killed, to accept of a preſent from the aggreſſor and his relations [a], as a compenſation for the injury [b], and to drop all farther proſecution of revenge. That the accommodation of one quarrel might not be the ſource of more, this preſent was fixed and certain, according to the rank of the perſon killed or injured, and was commonly paid in cattle, the chief property of thoſe rude and uncultivated nations. A preſent of this kind gratified the revenge of the injured family by the loſs which the aggreſſor ſuffered: It ſatisfied their pride by the ſubmiſſion which it expreſſed: It diminiſhed their regret for the loſs or injury of a kinſman by their acquiſition of new property: And thus general peace was for a moment reſtored to the ſociety [c].

But when the German nations had been ſettled ſome time in the provinces of the Roman empire, they made ſtill another ſtep towards a more cultivated life, and their criminal juſtice gradually improved and refined itſelf. The magiſtrate, whoſe office it was to guard public peace and to ſuppreſs private animoſities, conceived himſelf to be injured by every injury done to any of his people; and

[z] LL. Friſ. tit. 2. apud Lindenbrog. p. 401. [a] LL. Æthelb. § 23. LL. Ælf. § 27. [b] Called by the Saxons *mægbota*.

[c] Tacit. de morib. Germ. The author ſays, that the price of the compoſition was fixed; which muſt have been by the laws and the interpoſition of the magiſtrate.

beſides

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beſides the compenſation to the perſon who ſuffered, or to his family, he thought himſelf entitled to exact a fine, called the Fridwit, as an atonement for the breach of peace, and as a reward for the pains which he had taken in accommodating the quarrel. When this idea, which is ſo natural, was once ſuggeſted, it was willingly received both by magiſtrate and people. The numerous fines which were levied, augmented the revenue of the king: And the people were ſenſible, that he would be more vigilant in interpoſing with his good offices, when he reaped ſuch immediate advantage from them; and that injuries would be leſs frequent, when, beſides compenſation to the perſon injured, they were expoſed to this additional penalty [d].

This ſhort abſtract contains the hiſtory of the criminal juriſprudence of the northern nations for ſeveral centuries. The ſtate of England in this particular, during the period of the Anglo-Saxons, may be judged of by the collection of ancient laws, publiſhed by Lambard and Wilkins. The chief purport of theſe laws is not to prevent or entirely ſuppreſs private quarrels, which the legiſlators knew to be impoſſible, but only to regulate and moderate them. The laws of Alfred enjoin, that if any one know, that his enemy or aggreſſor, after doing him an injury, reſolves to keep within his own houſe *and his own lands* [e], he ſhall not fight him, till he require compenſation for the injury. If he be ſtrong enough to beſiege him in his houſe, he may do it for ſeven days without attacking him; and if the aggreſſor be willing, during that time, to ſurrender himſelf and his arms, his adverſary may detain him thirty days, but is afterwards obliged to reſtore him ſafe to his

[d] Beſides paying money to the relations of the deceaſed and to the king, the murderer was alſo obliged to pay the maſter of a ſlave or vaſſal a ſum as a compenſation for his loſs. This was called the *Manbote*. See Spell. Gloſſ. in verb. *Fredum, Manbot.*

[e] The addition of theſe laſt words in Italics appears neceſſary from what follows in the ſame law.

kindred,

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kindred, *and be content with the compenſation.* If the criminal fly to the temple, that ſanctuary muſt not be violated. Where the aſſailant has not force ſufficient to beſiege the criminal in his houſe, he muſt apply to the alderman for aſſiſtance; and if the alderman refuſe aid, the aſſailant muſt have recourſe to the king: And he is not allowed to aſſault the houſe, till after this ſupreme magiſtrate has refuſed aſſiſtance. If any one meet with his enemy, and be ignorant that he was reſolved to keep within his own lands, he muſt, before he attack him, require him to ſurrender himſelf priſoner, and deliver up his arms; in which caſe he may detain him thirty days: But if he refuſe to deliver up his arms, it is then lawful to fight him. A ſlave may fight in his maſter's quarrel: A father may fight in his ſon's with any one, except with his maſter [f].

It was enacted by king Ina, that no man ſhould take revenge for an injury till he had firſt demanded compenſation, and had been refuſed it [g].

King Edmond, in the preamble to his laws, mentions the general miſery, occaſioned by the multiplicity of private feuds and battles; and he eſtabliſhes ſeveral expedients to remedy this grievance. He ordains, that, if any one commit murder, he may, with the aſſiſtance of his kindred, pay within a twelvemonth the fine of his crime; and if they abandon him, he ſhall alone ſuſtain the deadly feud or quarrel with the kindred of the murdered perſon: His own kindred are free from the feud, but on condition that they neither converſe with the criminal, nor ſupply him with meat *or other neceſſaries:* If any of them, after renouncing him, receive him into their houſe, *or give him aſſiſtance*, they are finable to the king, and are involved in the feud. If the kindred of the murdered perſon take revenge on any but the criminal himſelf, *after he is aban-*

[f] LL. Ælfr. § 28. Wilkins, p. 43. [g] LL. Inæ, § 9.

doned

doned by his kindred, all their property is forfeited, and they are declared to be enemies to the king and all his friends [h]. It is alſo ordained, that the fine for murder ſhall never be remitted by the king [i], and that no criminal ſhall be killed who flies to the church, or any of the king's towns [k]; and the king himſelf declares, that his houſe ſhall give no protection to murderers, till they have ſatisfied the church by their penance, and the kindred of the deceaſed by making compenſation [l]. The method appointed for tranſacting this compoſition is found in the ſame law [m].

THESE attempts of Edmond, to contract and diminiſh the feuds, were contrary to the ancient ſpirit of the northern barbarians, and were a ſtep towards a more regular adminiſtration of juſtice. By the Salic law, any man might, by a public declaration, exempt himſelf from his family quarrels: But then he was conſidered by the law as no longer belonging to the family; and he was deprived of all right of ſucceſſion, as the puniſhment of his cowardice [n].

THE price of the king's head, or his weregild, as it was then called, was by law 30,000 thrimſas, a ſpecies of coin whoſe value is uncertain. The price of the prince's head was 15,000 thrimſas; that of a biſhop's or alderman's 8000; a ſheriff's 4000; a thane's or clergyman's 2000; a ceorle's 266. Theſe prices were fixed by the laws of the Angles. By the Mercian law, the price of a ceorle's head was 200 ſhillings; that of a thane's ſix times as much; that of a king's ſix times more [o]. By the laws of Kent, the price of the archbiſhop's head was higher than that of the king's [p]. Such reſpect was then paid to the eccleſiaſtics! It muſt be un-

[h] LL. Edm. § 1. Wilkins, p. 73. [i] LL. Edm. § 3.
[k] LL. Edm. § 2. [l] LL. Edm. § 4. [m] LL. Edm. § 7.
[n] Tit. 63. [o] Wilkins, p. 71, 72. [p] LL. Ethredi, apud Wilkins, p. 110.

derſtood,

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derſtood, that, where a perſon was unable or unwilling to pay the fine, he was put out of the protection of law, and the kindred of the deceaſed had liberty to puniſh him as they thought proper.

SOME antiquaries [q] have thought, that theſe compenſations were only given for man-ſlaughter, not for wilful murder: But no ſuch diſtinction appears in the laws; and it is contradicted by the practice of all the other barbarous nations [r], by that of the ancient Germans [s], and by that curious monument above mentioned of Saxon antiquity, preſerved by Hickes. There is indeed a law of Alfred's which makes wilful murder capital [t]; but this ſeems only to have been an attempt of that great legiſlator to eſtabliſh a better police in the kingdom, and it probably remained without execution. By the laws of the ſame prince, a conſpiracy againſt the life of the king might be redeemed by a fine [u].

THE price of all kinds of wounds was likewiſe fixed by the Saxon laws: A wound of an inch long under the hair was paid with one ſhilling: One of a like ſize on the face, two ſhillings: Thirty ſhillings for the loſs of an ear; and ſo forth [w]. There ſeems not to have been any difference made, according to the dignity of the perſon. By the laws of Ethelbert, any one who committed adultery with his neighbour's wife was obliged to pay him a fine, and buy him another wife [x].

THESE inſtitutions are not peculiar to the ancient Germans. They ſeem to be the neceſſary progreſs of criminal juriſprudence among every free people, where

[q] Tyrrel introduct. vol. i. p. 126. Carte, vol. i. p. 366.

[r] Lindenbrogius, paſſim. [s] Tac. de mor. Germ.

[t] LL. Ælf. § 12. Wilkins, p. 29. It is probable, that by wilful murder Alfred means a treacherous murder, committed by one who has no declared feud with another. [u] LL. Ælf. § 4. Wilkins, p. 35.

[w] LL. Ælf. § 40. See alſo LL. Ethelb. § 34, &c.

[x] LL. Ethelb. § 32.

the

the will of the ſovereign is not implicitly obeyed. We find them among the ancient Greeks during the time of the Trojan war. Compoſitions for murder are mentioned in Neſtor's ſpeech to Achilles in the ninth Iliad, and are called ἀποινα. The Iriſh, who never had any connections with the German nations, adopted the ſame practice till very lately; and the price of a man's head was called among them his *eric*; as we learn from Sir John Davis. The ſame cuſtom ſeems alſo to have prevailed among the Jews [y].

THEFT and robbery were frequent among the Anglo-Saxons. In order to impoſe ſome check upon theſe crimes, it was ordained, that no man ſhould ſell or buy any thing above twenty pence value, except in open market [z]; and every bargain of ſale muſt be executed before witneſſes [a]. Gangs of robbers much diſturbed the peace of the country; and the law determined, that a tribe of banditti, conſiſting of between ſeven and thirty-five perſons, was to be called a *turma*, or troop: Any greater company was denominated an army [b]. The puniſhments for this crime were various, but none of them capital [c]. If any man could track his ſtolen cattle into another's ground, the latter was obliged to ſhow the tracks out of it, or pay their value [d].

TREASON and rebellion, to whatever exceſs they were carried, were not capital, but might be redeemed by a ſum of money [e]. The legiſlators, knowing it impoſſible to prevent all diſorders, only impoſed a higher fine on breaches of the peace committed in the king's court, or before an alderman or biſhop. An alehouſe too ſeems to

y Exod. cap. xxi. 29, 30.

z LL. Æthelſt. § 12.

a LL. Æthelſt. § 10, 12. LL. Edg. apud Wilkins, p. 80. LL. Ethelredi, § 4. apud Wilkins, p. 103. Hloth. & Eadm. § 16. LL. Canut. § 22.

b LL. Inæ, § 12.

c LL. Inæ, § 37.

d LL. Æthelſt. § 2. Wilkins, p. 63.

e LL. Ethelredi, apud Wilkins, p. 110. LL. Ælf. § 4. Wilkins, p. 35.

have

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have been considered as a privileged place; and any quarrels that arose there were more severely punished than elsewhere [f].

Rules of proof.

If the manner of punishing crimes among the Anglo-Saxons appears singular, the proofs were not less so; and were also the natural result of the situation of those people. Whatever we may imagine concerning the usual truth and sincerity of men, who live in a rude and barbarous state, there is much more falsehood, and even perjury among them, than among civilized nations: Virtue, which is nothing but a more enlarged and more cultivated reason, never flourishes to any degree, nor is founded on steady principles of honour, except where a good education becomes general; and where men are taught the pernicious consequences of vice, treachery, and immorality. Even superstition, though more prevalent among ignorant nations, is but a poor supply for the defects in knowledge and education: Our European ancestors, who employed every moment the expedient of swearing on extraordinary crosses and reliques, were less honourable in all engagements than their posterity, who from experience have omitted those ineffectual securities. This general proneness to perjury was much encreased by the usual want of discernment in judges, who could not discuss an intricate evidence, and were obliged to number, not weigh, the testimony of the witnesses [g]. Hence the ridiculous practice of obliging men to bring compurgators, who, as they did not pretend to know any thing of the fact, expressed upon oath, that they believed the person spoke true; and these compurgators were in some cases multi-

[f] LL. Hloth. & Eadm. § 12, 13. LL. Ethelr. apud Wilkins, p. 117.

[g] Sometimes the laws fixed easy general rules for weighing the credibility of witnesses. A man whose life was estimated at 120 shillings counterbalanced six ceorles, each of whose lives was only valued at twenty shillings, and his oath was esteemed equivalent to that of all the six. See Wilkins, p. 72.

plied

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plied to the number of three hundred [h]. The practice alſo of ſingle combat was employed by moſt nations on the continent as a remedy againſt falſe evidence [i]; and though it was frequently dropped, from the oppoſition of the clergy, it was continually revived, from experience of the falſehood attending the teſtimony of witneſſes [k]. It became at laſt a ſpecies of juriſprudence: The caſes were determined by law, in which the party might challenge his adverſary, or the witneſſes, or the judge himſelf [l]: And though theſe cuſtoms were abſurd, they were rather an improvement on the methods of trial, which had formerly been practiſed among thoſe barbarous nations, and which ſtill prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons.

When any controverſy about a fact became too intricate for thoſe ignorant judges to unravel, they had recourſe to what they called the judgment of God, that is, to fortune: Their methods for conſulting this oracle were various. One of them was the deciſion by the *croſs*: It was practiſed in this manner. When a perſon was accuſed of any crime, he firſt cleared himſelf by oath, and he was attended by eleven compurgators. He next took two pieces of wood, one of which was marked with the ſign of the croſs; and wrapping both up in wool, he placed them on the altar, or on ſome celebrated relique. After ſolemn prayers for the ſucceſs of the experiment, a prieſt, or in his ſtead ſome unexperienced youth, took up one of the pieces of wood, and if he happened upon that which was marked with the figure of the croſs, the perſon was pronounced innocent; if otherwiſe, guilty [m]. This practice, as it aroſe from ſuperſtition, was aboliſhed by it in France. The emperor, Lewis the Debonnaire,

[h] Præf. Nicol. ad Wilkins, p. 11.
[i] LL. Burgund. cap. 45.
[k] LL. Lomb. lib. 2. tit. 55. cap. 34.
[l] LL. Longob. lib. 2. tit. 55. cap. 23. apud Lindenb. p. 661.
[l] See Desfontaines and Beaumanoir.
[m] LL. Friſon. tit. 14. apud Lindenbrogium, p. 496.

prohibited

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prohibited that method of trial, not becauſe it was uncertain, but leſt that ſacred figure, ſays he, of the croſs ſhould be proſtituted in common diſputes and controverſies [n].

THE ordeal was another eſtabliſhed method of trial among the Anglo-Saxons. It was practiſed either by boiling water or red-hot iron. The former was appropriated to the common people; the latter to the nobility. The water or iron was conſecrated by many prayers, maſſes, faſtings, and exorciſms [o]; after which, the perſon accuſed either took up a ſtone ſunk in the water [p] to a certain depth, or carried the iron to a certain diſtance; and his hand being wrapped up, and the covering ſealed for three days, if there appeared, on examining it, no marks of burning, he was pronounced innocent; if otherwiſe, guilty [q]. The trial by cold water was different: The perſon was thrown into conſecrated water; if he ſwam, he was guilty; if he ſunk, innocent [r]. It is difficult for us to conceive, how any innocent perſon could ever eſcape by the one trial, or any criminal be convicted by the other. But there was another uſage admirably calculated for allowing every criminal to eſcape, who had confidence enough to try it. A conſecrated cake, called a corſned, was produced; which if the perſon could ſwallow and digeſt, he was pronounced innocent [s].

Military force.

THE feudal law, if it had place at all among the Anglo-Saxons, which is doubtful, was not certainly extended over all the landed property, and was not attended with thoſe conſequences of homage, reliefs [t], wardſhip,

[n] Du Gange in verb. Crux. [o] Spellm. in verb. Ordeal. Parker, p. 155. Lindenbrog, p. 1299. [p] LL. Inæ, § 77. [q] Sometimes the perſon accuſed walked barefoot over red hot iron. [r] Spellman in verb. Ordealium. [s] Spellm. in verb. Corſned. Parker, p. 156. Text. Roffenſ. p. 33. [t] On the death of an alderman, a greater or leſſer thane, there was a payment made to the king of his beſt arms; and this was called his heriot: But this was not of the nature of a relief. See Spellm. of tenures, p. 2. The value of this heriot was fixed by Canute's laws, § 69.

marriage,

marriage, and other burthens, which were inſeparable from it in the kingdoms of the continent. As the Saxons expelled or entirely deſtroyed the ancient Britons, they planted themſelves in this iſland on the ſame footing with their anceſtors in Germany, and found no occaſion for the feudal inſtitutions [u], which were calculated to maintain a kind of ſtanding army, always in readineſs to ſuppreſs any inſurrection among the conquered people. The trouble and expence of defending the ſtate in England lay equally upon all the land; and it was uſual for every five hides to equip a man for the ſervice. The *trinoda neceſſitas*, as it was called, or the burthen of military expeditions, of repairing highways, and of building and ſupporting bridges, was inſeparable from landed property, even though it belonged to the church or monaſteries, unleſs exempted by a particular charter [w]. The ceorles or huſbandmen were provided with arms, and were obliged to take their turn in military duty [x]. There were computed to be 243,600 hides in England [y]; conſequently the ordinary military force of the kingdom conſiſted of 48,720 men; though, no doubt, on extraordinary occaſions, a greater number might be aſſembled. The king and nobility had ſome military tenants, who were called Sithcun-men [z]. And there were ſome lands annexed to the office of alderman, and to other offices; but theſe probably were not of great extent, and were poſſeſſed only during pleaſure, as in the commencement of the feudal law in other countries of Europe.

Public revenue.

THE revenue of the king ſeems to have conſiſted chiefly in his demeſnes, which were large; and in the tolls and impoſts which he probably levied at diſcretion on the boroughs and ſea-ports, that lay within his demeſnes. He

[u] Bracton de Acqu. rer. domin. lib. 2. cap. 16. See more fully Spellman of feuds and tenures, and Craigius de jure feud. lib. 1. dieg. 7.

[w] Spellm. Conc. vol. i. p. 256. [x] Inæ, § 51. [y] Spellm. of feuds and tenures, p. 17. [z] Spellm. Conc, vol. i. p. 195.

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could not alienate any part of the crown lands, even to religious uſes, without the conſent of the ſtates [a]. Danegelt was a land-tax of a ſhilling a hide, impoſed by the ſtates [b], either for payment of the ſums exacted by the Danes, or for putting the kingdom in a poſture of defence againſt theſe invaders [c].

Value of money.

THE Saxon pound, as likewiſe that which was coined for ſome centuries after the conqueſt, was three times the weight of our preſent money: There were forty-eight ſhillings in the pound, and five pence in a ſhilling [d]; conſequently a Saxon ſhilling was a fifth heavier than ours, and a Saxon penny three times as heavy [e]. As to the value of money in thoſe times, compared to commodities, there are ſome, though not very certain, means of computation. A ſheep by the laws of Athelſtan was eſtimated at a ſhilling; that is, fifteen-pence of our money. The fleece was two-fifths of the value of the whole ſheep [f]; much above its preſent eſtimation; and the reaſon probably was, that the Saxons, like the ancients, were little acquainted with any other clothing but what was made of wool. Silk and cotton were quite unknown: Linen was not much uſed. An ox was computed at ſix times the value of a ſheep; a cow at four [g]. If we ſuppoſe, that the cattle in that age, from the defects in huſbandry, were not ſo large as they are at preſent in England, we may compute, that money was then near ten times of greater value. A horſe was valued at about thirty-ſix ſhillings of our money, or thirty Saxon ſhillings [h]; a mare a third leſs. A man at three pounds [i]. The board-wages of a child the firſt year was eight ſhillings, together with a cow's paſture in ſummer, and an

[a] Spellm. Conc. vol. i. p. 340. [b] Chron. Sax. p. 128.
[c] LL. Edw. Con. § 12. [d] LL. Ælf. § 40. [e] Fleetwood's Chron. Pretioſum, p. 27, 28, &c. [f] LL. Inæ, § 69.
[g] Wilkins, p. 66. [h] Ibid. p. 126. [i] Ibid.

OX'S

ox's in winter [k]. William of Malmesbury mentions it as a remarkably high price that William Rufus gave fifteen marks for a horse, or about thirty pounds of our present money [l]. Between the years 900 and 1000, Ednoth bought a hide of land for about 118 shillings of present money [m]. This was a little more than a shilling an acre, which indeed appears to have been the usual price, as we may learn from other accounts [n]. A palfrey was sold for twelve shillings about the year 966 [o]. The value of an ox in king Ethelred's time was between seven and eight shillings; a cow about six shillings [p]. Gervas of Tilbury says, that in Henry I.'s time, bread which would suffice a hundred men for a day was rated at three shillings, or a shilling of that age; for it is thought that soon after the conquest a pound sterling was divided into twenty shillings: A sheep was rated at a shilling, and so of other things in proportion. In Athelstan's time a ram was valued at a shilling, or four-pence Saxon [q]. The tenants of Shireburn were obliged, at their choice, to pay either six-pence or four hens [r]. About 1232, the abbot of St. Albans, going on a journey, hired seven handsome stout horses; and agreed, if any of them died on the road, to pay the owner 30 shillings a-piece of our present money [s]. It is to be remarked, that in all ancient times, the raising of corn, especially wheat, being a species of manufactory, that commodity bore always a higher price, compared to cattle, than it does in our times [t]. The Saxon Chronicle tells us [u], that in the reign of Edward the Confessor there was the most terrible famine ever known; in so much that a quarter of wheat rose to sixty pennies, or fifteen shillings of our present money. Consequently it was as dear as if it now cost seven pounds ten shillings.

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k LL. Inæ, § 38. l P. 121. m Hist. Ramesf p. 415.
n Hist. Elienf. p. 473. o Hist. Elienf. p. 471. p Wilkins, p. 125. q Wilkins, p. 56. r Mon st. Anglic. vol. ii. p. 58.
s Mat. Paris. t Fleetwood, p. 83, 94, 96, 98. u P. 157.

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This much exceeds the great famine in the end of queen Elizabeth; when a quarter of wheat was ſold for four pounds. Money in this laſt period was nearly of the ſame value as in our time. Theſe ſevere famines are a certain proof of bad huſbandry.

On the whole, there are three things to be conſidered, wherever a ſum of money is mentioned in ancient times. Firſt the change of denomination, by which a pound has been reduced to the third part of its ancient weight in ſilver. Secondly, the change in value by the greater plenty of money, which has reduced the ſame weight of ſilver to ten times leſs value, compared to commodities; and conſequently a pound ſterling to the thirtieth part of the ancient value. Thirdly, the fewer people and leſs induſtry, which were then to be found in every European kingdom. This circumſtance made even the thirtieth part of the ſum more difficult to levy, and cauſed any ſum to have more than thirty times greater weight and influence both abroad and at home, than in our times; in the ſame manner that a ſum, a hundred thouſand pounds for inſtance, is at preſent more difficult to levy in a ſmall ſtate, ſuch as Bavaria, and can produce greater effects on ſuch a ſmall community, than on England. This laſt difference is not eaſy to be calculated: But allowing, that England has now ſix times more induſtry, and three times more people than it had at the conqueſt and for ſome reigns after that period, we are, upon that ſuppoſition, to conceive, taking all circumſtances together, every ſum of money mentioned by hiſtorians, as if it were multiplied more than a hundred fold above a ſum of the ſame denomination at preſent.

In the Saxon times, land was divided equally among all the male-children of the deceaſed, according to the cuſtom of Gavelkind. The practice of entails is to be found in thoſe times [x]. Land was chiefly of two kinds,

[x] LL. Ælf. § 37. apud Wilkins, p. 43.

bockland,

bockland, or land held by book or charter, which was regarded as full property, and deſcended to the heirs of the poſſeſſor; and folkland, or the land held by the ceorles and common people, who were removable at pleaſure, and were indeed only tenants during the will of their lords. Appendix I.

THE firſt attempt, which we find in England to ſeparate the eccleſiaſtical from the civil juriſdiction, was that law of Edgar, by which all diſputes among the clergy were ordered to be carried before the biſhop [y]. The pennances were then very ſevere; but as a man could buy them off with money, or might ſubſtitute others to perform them, they lay eaſy upon the rich [z].

WITH regard to the manners of the Anglo-Saxons we can ſay little, but that they were in general a rude, uncultivated people, ignorant of letters, unſkilled in the mechanical arts, untamed to ſubmiſſion under law and government, addicted to intemperance, riot, and diſorder. Their beſt quality was their military courage, which yet was not ſupported by diſcipline or conduct. Their want of fidelity to the prince, or to any truſt repoſed in them, appears ſtrongly in the hiſtory of their later period; and their want of humanity in all their hiſtory. Even the Norman hiſtorians, notwithſtanding the low ſtate of the arts in their own country, ſpeak of them as barbarians, when they mention the invaſion made upon them by the duke of Normandy [a]. The conqueſt put the people in a ſituation of receiving ſlowly, from abroad, the rudiments of ſcience and cultivation, and of correcting their rough and licentious manners. Manners.

y Wilkins, p. 83.
z Gul. Put. p. 202.
a Ibid. p. 96, 97. Spell. Conc. p. 473.

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WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Conſequences of the battle of Haſtings—Submiſſion of the Engliſh—Settlement of the government—King's return to Normandy—Diſcontents of the Engliſh—Their inſurrections—Rigors of the Norman government—New inſurrections—New rigors of the government—Introduction of the feudal law—Innovation in eccleſiaſtical government—Inſurrection of the Norman barons—Diſpute about inveſtitures—Revolt of prince Robert—Doomſday-book—The New foreſt—War with France—Death—and character of William the Conqueror.

NOTHING could exceed the conſternation which ſeized the Engliſh, when they received intelligence of the unfortunate battle of Haſtings, the death of their king, the ſlaughter of their principal nobility and of their braveſt warriors, and the rout and diſperſion of the remainder. But though the loſs, which they had ſuſtained in that fatal action, was conſiderable, it might have been repaired by a great nation; where the people were generally armed, and where there reſided ſo many powerful noblemen in every province, who could have aſſembled their retainers, and have obliged the duke of Normandy to divide his army, and probably to waſte it in a variety of actions and rencounters. It was thus that the kingdom had formerly reſiſted, for many years, its invaders, and had been gradually ſubdued, by the continual efforts of the Romans, Saxons, and Danes; and

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1066. Conſequences of the battle of Haſtings.

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equal difficulties might have been apprehended by William in this bold and hazardous enterprize. But there were ſeveral vices in the Anglo-Saxon conſtitution, which rendered it difficult for the Engliſh to defend their liberties in ſo critical an emergency. The people had in a great meaſure loſt all national pride and ſpirit, by their recent and long ſubjection to the Danes; and as Canute had, in the courſe of his adminiſtration, much abated the rigors of conqueſt, and had governed them equitably by their own laws, they regarded with the leſs terror the ignominy of a foreign yoke, and deemed the inconveniences of ſubmiſſion leſs formidable than thoſe of bloodſhed, war, and reſiſtance. Their attachment alſo to the ancient royal family had been much weakened by their habits of ſubmiſſion to the Daniſh princes, and by their late election of Harold, or their acquieſcence in his uſurpation. And as they had long been accuſtomed to regard Edgar Atheling, the only heir of the Saxon line, as unfit to govern them even in times of order and tranquillity; they could entertain ſmall hopes of his being able to repair ſuch great loſſes as they had ſuſtained, or to withſtand the victorious arms of the duke of Normandy.

THAT they might not, however, be altogether wanting to themſelves in this extreme neceſſity, the Engliſh took ſome ſteps towards adjuſting their disjointed government, and uniting themſelves againſt the common enemy. The two potent earls, Edwin and Morcar, who had fled to London with the remains of the broken army, took the lead on this occaſion: In concert with Stigand, archbiſhop of Canterbury, a man poſſeſſed of great authority, and of ample revenues, they proclaimed Edgar, and endeavoured to put the people in a poſture of defence, and encourage them to reſiſt the Normans [b]. But the terror

[b] Gul. Pictav. p. 205. Order. Vitalis, p. 502. Hoveden, p. 449. Knyghton, p. 2343.

of

of the late defeat, and the near neighbourhood of the invaders, encreaſed the confuſion, inſeparable from great revolutions; and every reſolution propoſed was haſty, fluctuating, variable; diſconcerted by fear or faction; ill planned, and worſe executed.

WILLIAM, that his enemies might have no leiſure to recover their conſternation or unite their counſels, immediately put himſelf in motion after his victory, and reſolved to proſecute an enterprize, which nothing but celerity and vigor could render finally ſucceſsful. His firſt attempt was againſt Romney, whoſe inhabitants he ſeverely puniſhed, on account of their cruel treatment of ſome Norman ſeamen and ſoldiers, who had been carried thither by ſtreſs of weather, or by a miſtake in their courſe [c]: And foreſeeing that his conqueſt of England might ſtill be attended with many difficulties and with much oppoſition, he deemed it neceſſary, before he ſhould advance farther into the country, to make himſelf maſter of Dover, which would both ſecure him a retreat in caſe of adverſe fortune, and afford him a ſafe landing-place for ſuch ſupplies as might be requiſite for aſſiſting him to puſh his advantages. The terror, diffuſed by his victory at Haſtings, was ſo great, that the garriſon of Dover, though numerous and well provided, immediately capitulated; and as the Normans, ruſhing in to take poſſeſſion of the town, haſtily ſet fire to ſome of the houſes, William, deſirous to conciliate the minds of the Engliſh by an appearance of lenity and juſtice, made compenſation to the inhabitants for their loſſes [d].

THE Norman army, being much diſtreſſed with a dyſentery, was obliged to remain here eight days; and the duke, on their recovery, advanced with quick marches towards London, and by his approach encreaſed the confuſions, which were already ſo prevalent in the Engliſh

[c] Gul. Pictav. p. 204. [d] Ibid.

counſels,

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counsels. The ecclesiastics in particular, whose influence was great over the people, began to declare in his favour; and as most of the bishops and dignified clergymen were even then Frenchmen or Normans, the pope's bull, by which his enterprize was avowed and consecrated, was now openly insisted on as a reason for general submission. The superior learning of those prelates, which, during the Confessor's reign, had raised them above the ignorant Saxons, made their opinions be received with implicit faith; and a young prince, like Edgar, whose capacity was deemed so mean, was but ill qualified to resist the impression, which they made on the minds of the people. A repulse, which a body of Londoners received from five hundred Norman horse, renewed in the city the terror of the great defeat at Hastings; the easy submission of all the inhabitants of Kent was an additional discouragement to them; the burning of Southwark before their eyes made them dread a like fate to their own city; and no man any longer entertained thoughts but of immediate safety and of self-preservation. Even the earls, Edwin and Morcar, in despair of making effectual resistance, retired with their troops to their own provinces; and the people thenceforth disposed themselves unanimously to yield to the victor.

Submission of the English.

As soon as he passed the Thames at Wallingford, and reached Berkhamstead, Stigand, the primate, made submission to him: Before he came within sight of the city, all the chief nobility, and Edgar Atheling himself, the new elected king, came into his camp, and declared their intention of yielding to his authority [c]. They requested him to mount their throne, which they now considered as vacant; and declared to him, that, as they had always been ruled by regal power, they desired to follow, in this particular, the example of their ancestors, and knew of

[c] Hoveden, p. 450. Flor. Wigorn. p. 634.

no one more worthy than himself to hold the reins of government [f].

Though this was the great object, to which the duke's enterprize tended, he pretended to deliberate on the offer; and being desirous, at first, of preserving the appearance of a legal administration, he wished to obtain a more express and formal consent both of his own army and of the English nation [g]: But Aimar of Aquitain, a man equally respected for valour in the field, and for prudence in council, remonstrating with him on the danger of delay in so critical a conjuncture, he laid aside all farther scruples, and accepted of the crown which was tendered him. Orders were immediately issued to prepare every thing for the ceremony of his coronation; but as he was yet afraid to place entire confidence in the Londoners, who were numerous and warlike, he meanwhile commanded fortresses to be erected in order to curb the inhabitants, and to secure his person and government [h].

Stigand was not much in the duke's favour, both because he had intruded into the see on the expulsion of Robert, the Norman, and because he possessed such influence and authority over the English [i] as might be dangerous to a new established monarch. William, therefore, pretending that the primate had obtained his pall in an irregular manner from pope Benedict IX. who was himself an usurper, refused to be consecrated by him, and conferred this honour on Aldred, archbishop of York. Westminster abbey was the place appointed for that magnificent ceremony; the most considerable of the nobility, both English and Norman, attended the duke on this occasion; Aldred in a short speech asked the former, whether they agreed to accept of William as their king; the bishop of Coutance put the same question to the lat- 26th Dec.

[f] Gul. Pict. p. 205. Ord. Vital. p. 503. [g] Gul. Pictav. p. 205. [h] Ibid. [i] Eadmer, p. 6.

ter;

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ter; and both being answered with acclamations [k], Aldred administered to the duke the usual coronation oath, by which he bound himself to protect the church, to administer justice, and to repress violence: He then anointed him and put the crown upon his head [l]. There appeared nothing but joy in the countenance of the spectators: But in that very moment, there burst forth the strongest symptoms of the jealousy and animosity which prevailed between the nations, and which continually encreased during the reign of this prince. The Norman soldiers, who were placed without in order to guard the church, hearing the shouts within, fancied that the English were offering violence to their duke; and they immediately assaulted the populace, and set fire to the neighbouring houses. The alarm was conveyed to the nobility who surrounded the prince; both English and Normans, full of apprehensions, rushed out to secure themselves from the present danger; and it was with difficulty that William himself was able to appease the tumult [m].

1067. Settlement of the government.

THE king, thus possessed of the throne by a pretended destination of king Edward, and by an irregular election of the people, but still more by force of arms, retired from London to Berking in Essex; and there received the submissions of all the nobility, who had not attended his coronation. Edric, surnamed the Forester, grand-nephew to that Edric so noted for his repeated acts of perfidy during the reigns of Ethelred and Edmond; earl Coxo, a man famous for bravery; even Edwin and Morcar, earls of Mercia and Northumberland; with the other principal noblemen of England, came and swore fealty to him;

[k] Order. Vital. p. 503.

[l] Malmesbury, p. 271, says, that he also promised to govern the Normans and English by equal laws; and this addition to the usual oath seems not improbable, considering the circumstances of the times.

[m] Gul. Pict. p. 206. Order. Vitalis, p. 503.

were

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were received into favour; and were confirmed in the poſſeſſion of their eſtates and dignities [n]. Every thing bore the appearance of peace and tranquillity; and William had no other occupation than to give contentment to the foreigners who had aſſiſted him to mount the throne, and to his new ſubjects, who had ſo readily ſubmitted to him. 1067.

He had got poſſeſſion of the treaſure of Harold, which was conſiderable; and being alſo ſupplied with rich preſents from the opulent men in all parts of England, who were ſolicitous to gain the favour of their new ſovereign, he diſtributed great ſums among his troops, and by this liberality gave them hopes of obtaining at length thoſe more durable eſtabliſhments, which they had expected from his enterprize [o]. The eccleſiaſtics, both at home and abroad, had much forwarded his ſucceſs; and he failed not, in return, to expreſs his gratitude and devotion in the manner which was moſt acceptable to them: He ſent Harold's ſtandard to the pope, accompanied with many valuable preſents: All the conſiderable monaſteries and churches in France, where prayers had been put up for his ſucceſs, now taſted of his bounty [p]: The Engliſh monks found him well diſpoſed to favour their order: And he built a new convent near Haſtings, which he called *Battle-Abbey*, and which, on pretence of ſupporting monks to pray for his own ſoul, and for that of Harold, ſerved as a laſting memorial of his victory [q].

He introduced into England that ſtrict execution of juſtice, for which his adminiſtration had been much celebrated in Normandy; and even during this violent revolution, every diſorder or oppreſſion met with rigorous puniſhment [r]. His own army in particular was

[n] Gul. Pictav. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 506. [o] Gul. Pict. p. 206. [p] Ibid. [q] Gul. Gemet. p. 288. Chron. Sax. p. 189. M. Weſt. p. 226. M. Paris, p. 9. Diceto, p. 482. This convent was freed by him from all epiſcopal juriſdiction. Monaſt. Ang. tom. 1, p. 311, 312. [r] Gul. Pict. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 506.

governed

CHAP. IV. governed with ſevere diſcipline; and notwithſtanding the inſolence of victory, care was taken to give as little offence as poſſible to the jealouſy of the vanquiſhed. The king appeared ſolicitous to unite in an amicable manner the Normans and the Engliſh, by intermarriages and alliances; and all his new ſubjects who approached his perſon were received with affability and regard. No ſigns of ſuſpicion appeared, not even towards Edgar Atheling, the heir of the ancient royal family, whom William confirmed in the honours of earl of Oxford, conferred on him by Harold, and whom he affected to treat with the higheſt kindneſs, as nephew to the Confeſſor, his great friend and benefactor. Though he confiſcated the eſtates of Harold, and of thoſe who had fought in the battle of Haſtings on the ſide of that prince, whom he repreſented as an uſurper, he ſeemed willing to admit of every plauſible excuſe for paſt oppoſition to his pretenſions, and he received many into favour, who had carried arms againſt him. He confirmed the liberties and immunities of London and the other cities of England; and appeared deſirous of replacing every thing on ancient eſtabliſhments. In his whole adminiſtration, he bore the ſemblance of the lawful prince, not of the conqueror; and the Engliſh began to flatter themſelves, that they had changed, not the form of their government, but the ſucceſſion only of their ſovereigns, a matter which gave them ſmall concern. The better to reconcile his new ſubjects to his authority, William made a progreſs through ſome parts of England; and beſides a ſplendid court and majeſtic preſence, which overawed the people, already ſtruck with his military fame, the appearance of his clemency and juſtice gained the approbation of the wiſe, attentive to the firſt ſteps of their new ſovereign.

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But amidſt this confidence and friendſhip, which he expreſſed for the Engliſh, the king took care to place all real

real power in the hands of his Normans, and ſtill to keep poſſeſſion of the ſword, to which, he was ſenſible, he had owed his advancement to ſovereign authority. He diſarmed the city of London and other places, which appeared moſt warlike and populous; and building citadels in that capital, as well as in Wincheſter, Hereford, and the cities beſt ſituated for commanding the kingdom, he quartered Norman ſoldiers in all of them, and left no where any power able to reſiſt or oppoſe him. He beſtowed the forfeited eſtates on the moſt powerful of his captains, and eſtabliſhed funds for the payment of his ſoldiers. And thus, while his civil adminiſtration carried the face of a legal magiſtrate, his military inſtitutions were thoſe of a maſter and tyrant; at leaſt of one, who reſerved to himſelf, whenever he pleaſed, the power of aſſuming that character. CHAP. IV. 1067.

King's return to Normandy.

By this mixture, however, of vigour and lenity, he had ſo ſoothed the minds of the Engliſh, that he thought he might ſafely reviſit his native country, and enjoy the triumph and congratulation of his ancient ſubjects. He left the adminiſtration in the hands of his uterine brother, Odo, biſhop of Baieux, and of William Fitz Oſbern. That their authority might be expoſed to leſs danger, he carried over with him all the moſt conſiderable nobility of England, who, while they ſerved to grace his court by their preſence and magnificent retinues, were in reality hoſtages for the fidelity of the nation. Among theſe, were Edgar Atheling, Stigand the primate, the earls Edwin and Morcar, Waltheof, the ſon of the brave earl Siward, with others, eminent for the greatneſs of their fortunes and families, or for their eccleſiaſtical and civil dignities. He was viſited at the abbey of Feſcamp, where he reſided during ſome time, by Rodulph, uncle to the king of France, and by many powerful princes and nobles, who, having contributed to his enterprize, were

March.

deſirous

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desirous of participating in the joy and advantages of its success. His English courtiers, willing to ingratiate themselves with their new sovereign, outvyed each other in equipages and entertainments; and made a display of riches, which struck the foreigners with astonishment. William of Poictiers, a Norman historian [s], who was present, speaks with admiration of the beauty of their persons, the size and workmanship of their silver plate, the costliness of their embroideries, an art in which the English then excelled; and he expresses himself in such terms, as tend much to exalt our idea of the opulence and cultivation of the people [t]. But though every thing bore the face of joy and festivity, and William himself treated his new courtiers with great appearance of kindness, it was impossible altogether to prevent the insolence of the Normans; and the English nobles derived little satisfaction from those entertainments, where they considered themselves as led in triumph by their ostentatious conqueror.

Discontents of the English.

In England affairs took still a worse turn during the absence of the sovereign. Discontents and complaints multiplied every where; secret conspiracies were entered into against the government; hostilities were already begun in many places; and every thing seemed to menace a revolution as rapid as that which had placed William on the throne. The historian above-mentioned, who is a panegyrist of his master, throws the blame entirely on the fickle and mutinous disposition of the English, and highly celebrates the justice and lenity of Odo's and Fitz Osbern's administration [u]. But other historians, with

[s] P. 211, 212.

[t] As the historian chiefly insists on the silver plate, his panegyrics on the English magnificence shows only how incompetent a judge he was of the matter. Silver was then of ten times the value, and was more than twenty times more rare than at present; and consequently, of all species of luxury, plate must have been the rarest.

[u] P. 212.

more probability, impute the cauſe chiefly to the Normans, who, deſpiſing a people that had ſo eaſily ſubmitted to the yoke, envying their riches, and grudging the reſtraints impoſed upon their own rapine, were deſirous of provoking them to a rebellion, by which they expected to acquire new confiſcations and forfeitures, and to gratify thoſe unbounded hopes, which they had formed in entering on this enterprize [w].

It is evident, that the chief reaſon of this alteration in the ſentiments of the Engliſh, muſt be aſcribed to the departure of William, who was alone able to curb the violence of his captains, and to overawe the mutinies of the people. Nothing indeed appears more ſtrange, than that this prince, in leſs than three months after the conqueſt of a great, warlike, and turbulent nation, ſhould abſent himſelf, in order to reviſit his own country, which remained in profound tranquillity, and was not menaced by any of its neighbours; and ſhould ſo long leave his jealous ſubjects at the mercy of an inſolent and licentious army. Were we not aſſured of the ſolidity of his genius, and the good ſenſe diſplayed in all other circumſtances of his conduct, we might aſcribe this meaſure to a vain oſtentation, which rendered him impatient to diſplay his pomp and magnificence among his ancient ſubjects. It is therefore more natural to believe, that, in ſo extraordinary a ſtep, he was guided by a concealed policy; and that, though he had thought proper at firſt to allure the people to ſubmiſſion by the ſemblance of a legal adminiſtration, he found, that he could neither ſatisfy his rapacious captains, nor ſecure his unſtable government, without farther exerting the rights of conqueſt, and ſeizing the poſſeſſions of the Engliſh. In order to give a pretence for this violence, he endeavoured, without diſcovering his intentions, to provoke and allure them into inſurrections,

[w] Order. Vital. p. 507.

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which, he thought, could never prove dangerous, while he detained all the principal nobility in Normandy, while a great and victorious army was quartered in England, and while he himself was so near to suppress any tumult or rebellion. But as no ancient writer has ascribed this tyrannical purpose to William, it scarcely seems allowable, from conjecture alone, to throw such an imputation upon him.

Their insurrections.

BUT whether we are to account for that measure from the king's vanity or from his policy, it was the immediate cause of all the calamities which the English endured during this and the subsequent reigns, and gave rise to those mutual jealousies and animosities between them and the Normans, which were never appeased, till a long tract of time had gradually united the two nations, and made them one people. The inhabitants of Kent, who had first submitted to the Conqueror, were the first that attempted to throw off the yoke: In confederacy with Eustace, count of Bologne, who had also been disgusted by the Normans, they made an attempt, though without success, on the garrison of Dover [x]. Edric, the Forester, whose possessions lay on the banks of the Severne, being provoked at the depredations of some Norman captains in his neighbourhood, formed an alliance with Blethyn and Rowallan, two Welsh princes; and endeavoured, with their assistance, to repel force by force [y]. But though these open hostilities were not very considerable, the disaffection was general among the English, who had become sensible, though too late, of their defenceless condition, and began already to experience those insults and injuries, which a nation must always expect, that allows itself to be reduced to that despicable situation. A secret conspiracy was entered into to perpetrate in one day a

[x] Gul. Gemet. p. 289. Order. Vital. p 508. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 245.

[y] Hoveden, p. 450. M. West. p. 226. Sim. Dunelm. p. 197.

general

general assassination of the Normans, like that which had formerly been executed upon the Danes; and the quarrel was become so general and national, that the vassals of earl Coxo, having desired him to head them in an insurrection, and finding him resolute in maintaining his fidelity to William, put him to death as a traitor to his country. CHAP. IV. 1067.

THE king, informed of these dangerous discontents, hastened over to England; and by his presence, and the vigorous measures which he pursued, disconcerted all the schemes of the conspirators. Such of them as had been more violent in their mutiny betrayed their guilt, by flying or concealing themselves; and the confiscation of their estates, while it encreased the number of malcontents, both enabled William to gratify farther the rapacity of his Norman captains, and gave them the prospect of new forfeitures and attainders. The king began to regard all his English subjects as inveterate and irreclaimable enemies; and thenceforth either embraced, or was more fully confirmed in the resolution, of seizing their possessions, and of reducing them to the most abject slavery. Though the natural violence and severity of his temper made him incapable of feeling any remorse in the execution of this tyrannical purpose, he had art enough to conceal his intention, and to preserve still some appearance of justice in his oppressions. He ordered all the English, who had been arbitrarily expelled by the Normans, during his absence, to be restored to their estates [z]: But at the same time, he imposed a general tax on the people, that of Danegelt, which had been abolished by the Confessor, and which had always been extremely odious to the nation [a]. Decemb. 6.

[z] Chron. Sax. p. 173. This fact is a full proof, that the Normans had committed great injustice, and were the real cause of the insurrections of the English.

[a] Hoveden, p. 450. Sim. Dunelm. p. 197. Alur. Beverl. p. 127.

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As the vigilance of William overawed the malcontents, their insurrections were more the result of an impatient humour in the people, than of any regular conspiracy, which could give them a rational hope of success against the established power of the Normans. The inhabitants of Exeter, instigated by Githa, mother to king Harold, refused to admit a Norman garrison, and betaking themselves to arms, were strengthened by the accession of the neighbouring inhabitants of Devonshire and Cornwal [b]. The king hastened with his forces to chastize this revolt: On his approach, the wiser and more considerable citizens, sensible of the unequal contest, persuaded the people to submit, and to deliver hostages for their obedience. A sudden mutiny of the populace broke this agreement; and William, appearing before the walls, ordered the eyes of one of the hostages to be put out, as an earnest of that severity, which the rebels must expect, if they persevered in their revolt [c]. The inhabitants were anew seized with terror, and surrendering at discretion, threw themselves at the king's feet, and supplicated his clemency and forgiveness. William was not destitute of generosity, when his temper was not hardened either by policy or passion: He was prevailed on to pardon the rebels, and he set guards on all the gates, in order to prevent the rapacity and insolence of his soldiery [d]. Githa escaped with her treasures to Flanders. The malcontents of Cornwal imitated the example of Exeter, and met with like treatment: And the king, having built a citadel in that city, which he put under the command of Baldwin, son of earl Gilbert, returned to Winchester, and dispersed his army into their quarters. He was here joined by his wife, Matilda, who had not before visited England, and whom he now ordered to be crowned by archbishop Aldred. Soon after, she brought him an accession

[b] Order. Vital. p. 510. [c] Ibid. [d] Ibid.

to

to his family, by the birth of a fourth ſon, whom he named Henry. His three elder ſons, Robert, Richard, and William, ſtill reſided in Normandy. CHAP. IV. 1068.

But though the king appeared thus fortunate both in public and domeſtic life, the diſcontents of his Engliſh ſubjects augmented daily; and the injuries, committed and ſuffered on both ſides, rendered the quarrel between them and the Normans abſolutely incurable. The inſolence of victorious maſters, diſperſed throughout the kingdom, ſeemed intolerable to the natives; and wherever they found the Normans, ſeparate or aſſembled in ſmall bodies, they ſecretly ſet upon them, and gratified their vengeance by the ſlaughter of their enemies. But an inſurrection in the north drew thither the general attention, and ſeemed to threaten more important conſequences. Edwin and Morcar appeared at the head of this rebellion; and theſe potent noblemen, before they took arms, ſtipulated for foreign ſuccours, from their nephew Blethin, prince of North-Wales, from Malcolm, king of Scotland, and from Sweyn, king of Denmark. Beſides the general diſcontent, which had ſeized the Engliſh; the two earls were incited to this revolt by private injuries. William, in order to inſure them to his intereſts, had, on his acceſſion, promiſed his daughter in marriage to Edwin; but either he had never ſeriouſly intended to perform this engagement, or having changed his plan of adminiſtration in England from clemency to rigour, he thought it was to little purpoſe, if he gained one family, while he enraged the whole nation. When Edwin, therefore, renewed his applications, he gave him an abſolute denial [e]; and this diſappointment, added to ſo many other reaſons of diſguſt, induced that nobleman and his brother to concur with their enraged countrymen, and to make one general effort for the recovery of their

[e] Order. Vital. p. 511.

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ancient liberties. William knew the importance of celerity in quelling an insurrection, supported by such powerful leaders, and so agreeable to the wishes of the people; and having his troops always in readiness, he advanced by great journies to the north. On his march he gave orders to fortify the castle of Warwick, of which he left Henry de Beaumont governor, and that of Nottingham, which he committed to the custody of William Peverell, another Norman captain [f]. He reached York before the rebels were in any condition for resistance, or were joined by any of the foreign succours, which they expected, except a small reinforcement from Wales [g]; and the two earls found no other means of safety, but having recourse to the clemency of the victor. Archil, a potent nobleman in those parts, imitated their example, and delivered his son as an hostage for his fidelity [h]; nor were the people, thus deserted by their leaders, able to make any farther resistance. But the treatment, which William gave the chiefs, was very different from that which fell to the share of their followers. He observed religiously the terms, which he had granted to the former; and allowed them, for the present, to keep possession of their estates; but he extended the rigors of his confiscations over the latter, and gave away their lands to his foreign adventurers. These, planted throughout the whole country, and in possession of the military power, left Edwin and Morcar, whom he pretended to spare, destitute of all support, and ready to fall, whenever he should think proper to command their ruin. A peace, which he made with Malcolm, who did him homage for Cumberland, seemed, at the same time, to deprive them of all prospect of foreign assistance [i].

Rigors of the Norman government.

THE English were now sensible that their final destruction was intended; and that, instead of a sovereign,

[f] Order. Vital. p. 511. [g] Ibid. [h] Ibid. [i] Ibid.

whom

whom they had hoped to gain by their submissions, they had tamely surrendered themselves, without resistance, to a tyrant and a conqueror. Though the early confiscation of Harold's followers might seem iniquitous; being inflicted on men who had never sworn fealty to the duke of Normandy, who were ignorant of his pretensions, and who only fought in defence of the government, which they themselves had established in their own country: Yet were these rigors, however contrary to the ancient Saxon laws, excused on account of the urgent necessities of the prince; and those who were not involved in the present ruin, hoped, that they should thenceforth enjoy without molestation their possessions and their dignities. But the successive destruction of so many other families convinced them, that the king intended to rely entirely on the support and affections of foreigners; and they foresaw new forfeitures, attainders, and acts of violence, as the necessary result of this destructive plan of administration. They observed, that no Englishman possessed his confidence, or was intrusted with any command or authority; and that the strangers, whom a rigorous discipline could have but ill restrained, were encouraged in their insolence and tyranny against them. The easy submission of the kingdom on its first invasion had exposed the natives to contempt; the subsequent proofs of their animosity and resentment had made them the object of hatred; and they were now deprived of every expedient, by which they could hope to make themselves either regarded or beloved by their sovereign. Impressed with the sense of this dismal situation, many Englishmen fled into foreign countries, with an intention of passing their lives abroad free from oppression, or of returning on a favourable opportunity to assist their friends in the recovery of their native liberties [i]. Edgar Atheling himself, dreading

[i] Order. Vital. p. 508. M. West. p. 225. M. Paris, p. 4. Sim. Dun. p. 197.

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the insidious caresses of William, was persuaded by Cospatric, a powerful Northumbrian, to escape with him into Scotland; and he carried thither his two sisters Margaret and Christina. They were well received by Malcolm, who soon after espoused Margaret, the elder sister; and partly with a view of strengthening his kingdom by the accession of so many strangers, partly in hopes of employing them against the growing power of William, he gave great countenance to all the English exiles. Many of them settled there; and laid the foundation of families which afterwards made a figure in that kingdom.

While the English suffered under these oppressions, even the foreigners were not much at their ease; but finding themselves surrounded on all hands by enraged enemies, who took every advantage against them, and menaced them with still more bloody effects of the public resentment, they began to wish again for the tranquillity and security of their native country. Hugh de Grentmesnil, and Humphrey de Teliol, though entrusted with great commands, desired to be dismissed the service; and some others imitated their example: A desertion which was highly resented by the king, and which he punished by the confiscation of all their possessions in England [k]. But William's bounty to his followers could not fail of alluring many new adventurers into his service; and the rage of the vanquished English served only to excite the attention of the king and those warlike chiefs, and keep them in readiness to suppress every commencement of domestic rebellion or foreign invasion.

1069. New insurrections.

It was not long before they found occupation for their prowess and military conduct. Godwin, Edmond, and Magnus, three sons of Harold, had immediately after the defeat at Hastings, sought a retreat in Ireland; where,

[k] Order. Vitalis, p. 512.

having

having met with a kind reception from Dermot and other princes of that country, they projected an invaſion on England, and they hoped that all the exiles from Denmark, Scotland, and Wales, aſſiſted by forces from theſe ſeveral countries, would at once commence hoſtilities, and rouze the indignation of the Engliſh againſt their haughty conquerors. They landed in Devonſhire; but found Brian, ſon of the count of Britanny, at the head of ſome foreign troops, ready to oppoſe them; and being defeated in ſeveral actions, they were obliged to retreat to their ſhips, and to return with great loſs to Ireland [l]. The efforts of the Normans were now directed to the north, where affairs had fallen into the utmoſt confuſion. The more impatient of the Northumbrians had attacked Robert de Comyn, who was appointed governor of Durham; and gaining the advantage over him from his negligence, they put him to death in that city, with ſeven hundred of his followers [m]. This ſucceſs animated the inhabitants of York, who riſing in arms, ſlew Robert Fitz-Richard, their governor [n]; and beſieged in the caſtle William Mallet, on whom the command now devolved. A little after, the Daniſh troops landed from 300 veſſels: Oſberne, brother to king Sweyn, was entruſted with the command of theſe forces, and he was accompanied by Harold and Canute, two ſons of that monarch. Edgar Atheling appeared from Scotland, and brought along with him Coſpatric, Waltheof, Siward, Bearne, Merleſwain, Adelin, and other leaders, who, partly from the hopes which they gave of Scottiſh ſuccours, partly from their authority in thoſe parts, eaſily perſuaded the warlike and diſcontented Northumbrians to join the inſurrection. Mallet, that he might better provide for the defence of the

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[l] Gul. Gemet. p. 290. Order. Vital. p. 513. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 246.
[m] Order. Vital. p. 512. Chron. de Mailr. p. 116. Hoveden, p. 450. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 198.
[n] Order. Vital. p. 512.

citadel

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citadel of York, ſet fire to ſome houſes, which lay contiguous; but this expedient proved the immediate cauſe of his deſtruction. The flames, ſpreading into the neighbouring ſtreets, reduced the whole city to aſhes: The enraged inhabitants, aided by the Danes, took advantage of the confuſion to attack the caſtle, which they carried by aſſault; and the garriſon, to the number of 3000 men, was put to the ſword without mercy [o].

THIS ſucceſs proved a ſignal to many other parts of England, and gave the people an opportunity of ſhowing their malevolence to the Normans. Hereward, a nobleman in Eaſt-Anglia, celebrated for valour, aſſembled his followers, and taking ſhelter in the Iſle of Ely, made inroads on all the neighbouring country [p]. The Engliſh in the counties of Somerſet and Dorſet roſe in arms, and aſſaulted Montacute, the Norman governor; while the inhabitants of Cornwal and Devon inveſted Exeter, which, from the memory of William's clemency, ſtill remained faithful to him. Edric, the Foreſter, calling in the aſſiſtance of the Welſh, laid ſiege to Shrewſbury, and made head againſt earl Brient and Fitz-Oſberne, who commanded in thoſe quarters [q]. The Engliſh every where, repenting their former eaſy ſubmiſſion, ſeemed determined to make by concert one great effort for the recovery of their liberty, and for the expulſion of their oppreſſors.

WILLIAM, undiſmayed amidſt this ſcene of confuſion, aſſembled his forces, and animating them with the proſpect of new confiſcations and forfeitures, he marched againſt the rebels in the north, whom he regarded as the moſt formidable, and whoſe defeat he knew would ſtrike a terror into all the other malcontents. Joining policy to force, he tried, before his approach, to weaken the ene-

[o] Order. Vital. p. 513. Hoveden, p. 451. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 47.

[p] Ingulf, p. 71.

[q] Order. Vital. p. 514.

my,

my, by detaching the Danes from them; and he engaged Osberne, by large presents, and by offering him the liberty of plundering the sea-coast, to retire, without committing farther hostilities, into Denmark[r]. Cospatric, in despair of success, imitated the example; and making his submissions to the king, and paying a sum of money as an atonement for his insurrection, was received into favour, and even invested with the earldom of Northumberland. Waltheof, who long defended York with great courage, was allured with this appearance of clemency; and as William knew how to esteem valour even in an enemy, that nobleman had no reason to repent of this confidence[s]. Even Edric, compelled by necessity, made submissions to the Conqueror, and received forgiveness, which was soon after followed by some degree of trust and favour. Malcolm, coming too late to support his confederates, was constrained to retire; and all the English rebels in other parts, except Hereward, who still kept in his fastnesses, dispersed themselves, and left the Normans undisputed masters of the kingdom. Edgar Atheling, with his followers, sought again a retreat in Scotland from the pursuit of his enemies.

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But the seeming clemency of William towards the English leaders proceeded only from artifice, or from his esteem of individuals: His heart was hardened against all compassion towards the people; and he scrupled no measure, however violent or severe, which seemed requisite to support his plan of tyrannical administration. Sensible of the restless disposition of the Northumbrians, he determined to incapacitate them ever after from giving him disturbance, and he issued orders for laying entirely

1070. New rigors of the government.

[r] Hoveden, p. 451. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 47. Sim. Dun. p. 199. [s] Malmes. p. 104. H. Hunt. p. 369.

waste

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waſte that fertile country, which, for the extent of ſixty miles, lies between the Humber and the Tees [t]. The houſes were reduced to aſhes by the mercileſs Normans; the cattle ſeized and driven away; the inſtruments of huſbandry deſtroyed; and the inhabitants compelled either to ſeek for a ſubſiſtence in the ſouthern parts of Scotland, or if they lingered in England, from a reluctance to abandon their ancient habitations, they periſhed miſerably in the woods from cold and hunger. The lives of a hundred thouſand perſons are computed to have been ſacrificed to this ſtroke of barbarous policy [u], which, by ſeeking a remedy for a temporary evil, thus inflicted a laſting wound on the power and populouſneſs of the nation.

But William, finding himſelf entirely maſter of a people, who had given him ſuch ſenſible proofs of their impotent rage and animoſity, now reſolved to proceed to extremities againſt all the natives of England; and to reduce them to a condition, in which they ſhould no longer be formidable to his government. The inſurrections and conſpiracies in ſo many parts of the kingdom had involved the bulk of the landed proprietors, more or leſs, in the guilt of treaſon; and the king took advantage of executing againſt them, with the utmoſt rigour, the laws of forfeiture and attainder. Their lives were indeed commonly ſpared; but their eſtates were confiſcated, and either annexed to the royal demeſnes, or conferred with the moſt profuſe bounty on the Normans and other foreigners [w]. While the king's declared intention was to depreſs or rather entirely extirpate the Engliſh gentry [x], it is eaſy to believe that ſcarcely the form of juſtice would

[t] Chron. Sax. p. 174. Ingulf, p. 79. Malmeſ. p. 103. Hoveden, p. 451. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 47. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 199. Brompton, p. 966. Knyghton, p. 2344. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 702.

[u] Order. Vital. p. 515.

[w] Malmeſ. p. 104.

[x] H. Hunt. p. 370.

be obſerved in thoſe violent proceedings *; and that any ſuſpicions ſerved as the moſt undoubted proofs of guilt againſt a people thus devoted to deſtruction. It was crime ſufficient in an Engliſhman to be opulent or noble or powerful; and the policy of the king, concurring with the rapacity of foreign adventurers, produced almoſt a total revolution in the landed property of the kingdom. Ancient and honourable families were reduced to beggary; the nobles themſelves were every where treated with ignominy and contempt; they had the mortification of ſeeing their caſtles and manors poſſeſſed by Normans of the meaneſt birth and loweſt ſtations [y]; and they found themſelves carefully excluded from every road, which led either to riches or preferment †. CHAP. IV. 1070.

Introduction of the feudal law.

As power naturally follows property, this revolution alone gave great ſecurity to the foreigners; but William, by the new inſtitutions which he eſtabliſhed, took alſo care to retain for ever the military authority in thoſe hands, which had enabled him to ſubdue the kingdom. He introduced into England the feudal law, which he found eſtabliſhed in France and Normandy, and which, during that age, was the foundation both of the ſtability and of the diſorders, in moſt of the monarchical governments of Europe. He divided all the lands of England, with very few exceptions, beſide the royal demeſnes, into baronies; and he conferred theſe, with the reſervation of ſtated ſervices and payments, on the moſt conſiderable of his adventurers. Theſe great barons, who held immediately of the crown, ſhared out a great part of their lands to other foreigners, who were denominated knights or vaſſals, and who paid their lord the ſame duty and ſubmiſſion in peace and war, which he himſelf owed to his ſovereign. The whole kingdom contained about 700

* See note [H] at the end of the volume.

[y] Order. Vitalis, p. 521. M. Weſt. p. 229.

† See note [I] at the end of the volume.

chief

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chief tenants, and 60,215 knights-fees [z]; and as none of the native Engliſh were admitted into the firſt rank, the few, who retained their landed property, were glad to be received into the ſecond, and under the protection of ſome powerful Norman, to load themſelves and their poſterity with this grievous burthen, for eſtates which they had received free from their anceſtors [a]. The ſmall mixture of Engliſh, which entered into this civil or military fabric, (for it partook of both ſpecies) was ſo reſtrained by ſubordination under the foreigners, that the Norman dominion ſeemed now to be fixed on the moſt durable baſis, and to defy all the efforts of its enemies.

THE better to unite the parts of the government, and to bind them into one ſyſtem, which might ſerve both for defence againſt foreigners, and for the ſupport of domeſtic tranquillity, William reduced the eccleſiaſtical revenues under the ſame feudal law; and though he had courted the church on his firſt invaſion and acceſſion, he now ſubjected it to ſervices, which the clergy regarded as a grievous ſlavery, and as totally unbefitting their profeſſion. The biſhops and abbots were obliged, when required, to furniſh to the king during war a number of knights or military tenants, proportioned to the extent of property poſſeſſed by each ſee or abbey; and they were liable, in caſe of failure, to the ſame penalties which were exacted from the laity [b]. The pope and the eccleſiaſtics exclaimed againſt this tyranny, as they called it; but the king's authority was ſo well eſtabliſhed over the army, who held every thing from his bounty, that ſuperſtition itſelf, even in that age, when it was moſt prevalent, was conſtrained to bend under his ſuperior influence.

[z] Order. Vital. p. 523. Secretum Abbatis, apud Selden, Titles of Honour, p. 573. Spellm. Gloſſ. in verbo *Feodum*. Sir Robert Cotton.

[a] M. Weſt. p. 225. M. Paris, p. 4. Bracton, lib. 1. cap. 11. num. 1. Fleta, lib. 1. cap. 8. n. 2.

[b] M. Paris, p. 5. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 248.

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But as the great body of the clergy were ſtill natives, the king had much reaſon to dread the effects of their reſentment: He therefore uſed the precaution of expelling the Engliſh from all the conſiderable dignities, and of advancing foreigners in their place. The partiality of the Confeſſor towards the Normans had been ſo great, that, aided by their ſuperior learning, it had promoted them to many of the ſees in England; and even before the period of the conqueſt, ſcarcely more than ſix or ſeven of the prelates were natives of the country. But among theſe was Stigand, archbiſhop of Canterbury; a man, who, by his addreſs and vigour, by the greatneſs of his family and alliances, by the extent of his poſſeſſions, as well as by the dignity of his office, and his authority over the Engliſh, gave jealouſy to the king [c]. Though William had, on his acceſſion, affronted this prelate, by employing the archbiſhop of York to officiate at his conſecration, he was careful, on other occaſions, to load him with honours and careſſes, and to avoid giving him farther offence, till the opportunity ſhould offer of effectuating his final deſtruction [d]. The ſuppreſſion of the late rebellions, and the total ſubjection of the Engliſh, made him hope, that an attempt againſt Stigand, however violent, would be covered by his great ſucceſſes, and be overlooked amidſt the other important revolutions, which affected ſo deeply the property and liberty of the kingdom. Yet, notwithſtanding theſe great advantages, he did not think it ſafe to violate the reverence uſually paid to the primate, but under cover of a new ſuperſtition, which he was the great inſtrument of introducing into England.

Innovation in eccleſiaſtical government.

The doctrine, which exalted the papacy above all human power, had gradually diffuſed itſelf from the city and court of Rome; and was, during that age, much

[c] Parker, p. 161. [d] Ibid. p. 164.

more

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more prevalent in the southern than in the northern kingdoms of Europe. Pope Alexander, who had assisted William in his conquests, naturally expected, that the French and Normans would import into England, the same reverence for his sacred character, with which they were imbued in their own country; and would break the spiritual, as well as civil independancy of the Saxons, who had hitherto conducted their ecclesiastical government, with an acknowledgment indeed of primacy in the see of Rome, but without much idea of its title to dominion or authority. As soon, therefore, as the Norman prince seemed fully established on the throne, the pope dispatched Ermenfroy, bishop of Sion, as his legate into England; and this prelate was the first, that had ever appeared with that character in any part of the British islands. The king, though he was probably led by principle to pay this submission to Rome, determined, as is usual, to employ the incident as a means of serving his political purposes, and of degrading those English prelates, who were become obnoxious to him. The legate submitted to become the instrument of his tyranny; and thought, that the more violent the exertion of power, the more certainly did it confirm the authority of that court, from which he derived his commission. He summoned, therefore, a council of the prelates and abbots at Winchester; and being assisted by two cardinals, Peter and John, he cited before him Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, to answer for his conduct. The primate was accused of three crimes; the holding of the see of Winchester together with that of Canterbury; the officiating in the pall of Robert, his predecessor; and the having received his own pall from Benedict IX. who was afterwards deposed for symony, and for intrusion into the papacy [c].

[c] Hoveden, p. 453. Diceto, p. 482. Knyghton, p. 2345. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 5, 6. Ypod. Neust. p. 438.

These

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Theſe crimes of Stigand were mere pretences; ſince the firſt had been a practice not unuſual in England, and was never any where ſubjected to a higher penalty than a reſignation of one of the ſees; the ſecond was a pure ceremonial; and as Benedict was the only pope who then officiated, and his acts were never repealed, all the prelates of the church, eſpecially thoſe who lay at a diſtance, were excuſable for making their applications to him. Stigand's ruin, however, was reſolved on, and was proſecuted with great ſeverity. The legate degraded him from his dignity: The king confiſcated his eſtate, and caſt him into priſon, where he continued, in poverty and want, during the remainder of his life. Like rigour was exerciſed againſt the other Engliſh prelates: Agelric, biſhop of Seleſey, and Agelmare, of Elmham, were depoſed by the legate, and impriſoned by the king. Many conſiderable abbots ſhared the ſame fate: Egelwin, biſhop of Durham, fled the kingdom: Wulſtan, of Worceſter, a man of an inoffenſive character, was the only Engliſh prelate that eſcaped this general proſcription [f], and remained in poſſeſſion of his dignity. Aldred, archbiſhop of York, who had ſet the crown on William's head, had died a little before of grief and vexation, and had left his malediction to that prince on account of the breach of his coronation oath, and of the extreme tyranny with which, he ſaw, he was determined to treat his Engliſh ſubjects [g].

It was a fixed maxim in this reign, as well as in ſome of the ſubſequent, that no native of the iſland ſhould

[f] Brompton relates, that Wulſtan was alſo deprived by the ſynod; but refuſing to deliver his paſtoral ſtaff and ring to any but the perſon from whom he firſt received it, he went immediately to king Edward's tomb, and ſtruck the ſtaff ſo deeply into the ſtone, that none but himſelf was able to pull it out: Upon which he was allowed to keep his biſhopric. This inſtance may ſerve, inſtead of many, as a ſpecimen of the monkiſh miracles. See alſo the Annals of Burton, p. 284.

[g] Malmeſ. de geſt. Pont. p. 154.

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ever be advanced to any dignity, eccleſiaſtical, civil, or military [h]. The king therefore, upon Stigand's depoſition, promoted Lanfranc, a Milaneſe monk, celebrated for his learning and piety, to the vacant ſee. This prelate was rigid in defending the prerogatives of his ſtation; and after a long proceſs before the pope, he obliged Thomas, a Norman monk, who had been appointed to the ſee of York, to acknowledge the primacy of the archbiſhop of Canterbury. Where ambition can be ſo happy as to cover its enterprizes, even to the perſon himſelf, under the appearance of principle, it is the moſt incurable and inflexible of all human paſſions. Hence Lanfranc's zeal in promoting the intereſts of the papacy, by which he himſelf augmented his own authority, was indefatigable; and met with proportionable ſucceſs. The devoted attachment to Rome continually encreaſed in England; and being favoured by the ſentiments of the conquerors, as well as by the monaſtic eſtabliſhments formerly introduced by Edred and by Edgar, it ſoon reached the ſame height, at which it had, during ſome time, ſtood in France and Italy [i]. It afterwards went much farther; being favoured by that very remote ſituation, which had at firſt obſtructed its progreſs; and being leſs checked by knowledge and a liberal education, which were ſtill ſomewhat more common in the ſouthern countries.

1070.

THE prevalence of this ſuperſtitious ſpirit became dangerous to ſome of William's ſucceſſors, and incommodious to moſt of them: But the arbitrary ſway of this king over the Engliſh, and his extenſive authority over the foreigners, kept him from feeling any immediate inconveniencies from it. He retained the church in great ſubjection, as well as his lay ſubjects; and would allow none, of whatever character, to diſpute his ſovereign will

[h] Ingulf, p. 70, 71. [i] M. Weſt. p. 228. Lanfranc wrote in defence of the real preſence againſt Berengarius; and in thoſe ages of ſtupidity and ignorance, he was greatly applauded for that performance.

and

and pleaſure. He prohibited his ſubjects from acknowledging any one for pope whom he himſelf had not previouſly received: He required, that all the eccleſiaſtical canons, voted in any ſynod, ſhould firſt be laid before him, and be ratified by his authority: Even bulls or letters from Rome could not legally be produced, till they received the ſame ſanction: And none of his miniſters or barons, whatever offences they were guilty of, could be ſubjected to ſpiritual cenſures, till he himſelf had given his conſent to their excommunication [k]. Theſe regulations were worthy of a ſovereign, and kept united the civil and eccleſiaſtical powers, which the principles, introduced by this prince himſelf, had an immediate tendency to ſeparate. CHAP. IV. 1070.

But the Engliſh had the cruel mortification to find, that their king's authority, however acquired or however extended, was all employed in their oppreſſion; and that the ſcheme of their ſubjection, attended with every circumſtance of inſult and indignity [l], was deliberately formed by the prince, and wantonly proſecuted by his followers [m]. William had even entertained the difficult project of totally aboliſhing the Engliſh language; and, for that purpoſe, he ordered, that, in all ſchools throughout the kingdom, the youth ſhould be inſtructed in the French tongue, a practice which was continued from cuſtom till after the reign of Edward III. and was never indeed totally diſcontinued in England. The pleadings in the ſupreme courts of judicature were in French [n]: The deeds were often drawn in the ſame language: The laws were compoſed in that idiom [o]: No other tongue was uſed at court: It became the language of all faſhionable company; and the Engliſh themſelves, aſhamed of

[k] Eadmer, p. 6. [l] Order Vital. p. 523. H. Hunt. p. 370.
[m] Ingulf, p. 71. [n] 36 Ed. III. cap. 15. Selden Spicileg. ad Eadmer, p. 189. Forteſcue de laud. leg. Angl. cap. 48.
[o] Chron. Rothom. A. D. 1066.

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their own country, affected to excel in that foreign dialect. From this attention of William, and from the extensive foreign dominions, long annexed to the crown of England, proceeded that mixture of French, which is at present to be found in the English tongue, and which composes the greatest and best part of our language. But amidst those endeavours to depress the English nation, the king, moved by the remonstrances of some of his prelates, and by the earnest desires of the people, restored a few of the laws of king Edward [p]; which, though seemingly of no great consequence towards the protection of general liberty, gave them extreme satisfaction, as a memorial of their ancient government, and an unusual mark of complaisance in their imperious conquerors *.

1070.

1071. THE situation of the two great earls, Morcar and Edwin, became now very disagreeable. Though they had retained their allegiance, during this general insurrection of their countrymen, they had not gained the king's confidence, and they found themselves exposed to the malignity of the courtiers, who envied them on account of their opulence and greatness, and at the same time involved them in that general contempt which they entertained for the English. Sensible that they had entirely lost their dignity, and could not even hope to remain long in safety; they determined, though too late, to share the same fate with their countrymen. While Edwin retired to his estate in the north, with a view of commencing an insurrection, Morcar took shelter in the Isle of Ely with the brave Hereward, who, secured by the inaccessible situation of the place, still defended himself against the Normans. But this attempt served only to accelerate the ruin of the few English, who had hitherto been able to preserve their rank or fortune during the

[p] Ingulf, p. 88. Brompton, p. 982. Knyghton, p. 2355. Hoveden, p. 600.

* See note [K] at the end of the volume.

past

paſt convulſions. William employed all his endeavours to ſubdue the Iſle of Ely; and having ſurrounded it with flat-bottomed boats, and made a cauſeway through the moraſſes to the extent of two miles, he obliged the rebels to ſurrender at diſcretion. Hereward alone forced his way, ſword in hand, through the enemy; and ſtill continued his hoſtilities by ſea againſt the Normans, till at laſt William, charmed with his bravery, received him into favour, and reſtored him to his eſtate. Earl Morcar, and Egelwin, biſhop of Durham, who had joined the malcontents, were thrown into priſon, and the latter ſoon after died in confinement. Edwin, attempting to make his eſcape into Scotland, was betrayed by ſome of his followers; and was killed by a party of Normans, to the great affliction of the Engliſh, and even to that of William, who paid a tribute of generous tears to the memory of this gallant and beautiful youth. The king of Scotland, in hopes of profiting by theſe convulſions, had fallen upon the northern counties; but on the approach of William he retired; and when the king entered his country, he was glad to make peace, and to pay the uſual homage to the Engliſh crown. To complete the king's proſperity, Edgar Atheling himſelf, deſpairing of ſucceſs, and weary of a fugitive life, ſubmitted to his enemy; and receiving a decent penſion for his ſubſiſtance, was permitted to live in England unmoleſted. But theſe acts of generoſity towards the leaders were diſgraced, as uſual, by William's rigour againſt the inferior malcontents. He ordered the hands be lopt off, and the eyes to be put out, of many of the priſoners, whom he had taken in the Iſle of Ely; and he diſperſed them in that miſerable condition throughout the country, as monuments of his ſeverity. 1071.

THE province of Maine in France had, by the will of Hebert, the laſt count, fallen under the dominion of 1073.

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William ſome years before his conqueſt of England; but the inhabitants, diſſatisfied with the Norman government, and inſtigated by Fulk count of Anjou, who had ſome pretenſions to the ſucceſſion, now roſe in rebellion, and expelled the magiſtrates, whom the king had placed over them. The full ſettlement of England afforded him leiſure to puniſh this inſult on his authority; but being unwilling to remove his Norman forces from this iſland, he carried over a conſiderable army, compoſed almoſt entirely of Engliſh, and joining them to ſome troops levied in Normandy, he entered the revolted province. The Engliſh appeared ambitious of diſtinguiſhing themſelves on this occaſion, and of retrieving that character of valour, which had long been national among them; but which their late eaſy ſubjection under the Normans had ſomewhat degraded and obſcured. Perhaps too they hoped that, by their zeal and activity, they might recover the confidence of their ſovereign, as their anceſtors had formerly, by like means, gained the affections of Canute; and might conquer his inveterate prejudices in favour of his own countrymen. The king's military conduct, ſeconded by theſe brave troops, ſoon overcame all oppoſition in Maine: The inhabitants were obliged to ſubmit, and the count of Anjou relinquiſhed his pretenſions.

1073.

1074. Inſurrection of the Norman barons.

But during theſe tranſactions, the government of England was greatly diſturbed; and that too by thoſe very foreigners, who owed every thing to the king's bounty, and who were the ſole object of his friendſhip and regard. The Norman barons, who had engaged with their duke in the conqueſt of England, were men of the moſt independant ſpirit; and though they obeyed their leader in the field, they would have regarded with diſdain the richeſt acquiſitions, had they been required, in return, to ſubmit, in their civil government, to the arbitrary will of one man. But the imperious character

racter of William, encouraged by his abſolute dominion over the Engliſh, and often impelled by the neceſſity of his affairs, had prompted him to ſtretch his authority over the Normans themſelves, beyond what the free genius of that victorious people could eaſily bear. The diſcontents were become general among thoſe haughty nobles; and even Roger, earl of Hereford, ſon and heir of Fitz-Oſberne, the king's chief favourite, was ſtrongly infected with them. This nobleman, intending to marry his ſiſter to Ralph de Guader, earl of Norfolk, had thought it his duty to inform the king of his purpoſe, and to deſire the royal conſent; but meeting with a refuſal, he proceeded nevertheleſs to complete the nuptials, and aſſembled all his friends, and thoſe of Guader, to attend the ſolemnity. The two earls, diſguſted by the denial of their requeſt, and dreading William's reſentment for their diſobedience, here prepared meaſures for a revolt; and during the gaiety of the feſtival, while the company was heated with wine, they opened the deſign to their gueſts. They inveighed againſt the arbitrary conduct of the king; his tyranny over the Engliſh, whom they affected on this occaſion to commiſerate; his imperious behaviour to his barons of the nobleſt birth; and his apparent intention of reducing the victors and the vanquiſhed to a like ignominious ſervitude. Amidſt their complaints, the indignity of ſubmitting to a baſtard [q] was not forgot; the certain proſpect of ſucceſs in a revolt, by the aſſiſtance of the Danes and the diſcontented Engliſh, was inſiſted on; and the whole company, inflamed with the ſame ſentiments, and warmed by the jollity of the entertainment, entered, by a ſolemn engagement, into the deſign of ſhaking off the royal authority. Even earl Waltheof, who was preſent, inconſi-

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[q] William was ſo little aſhamed of his birth, that he aſſumed the appellation of Baſtard in ſome of his letters and charters. Spellm. Gloſſ. in verb. *Baſtardus*. Camden in *Richmondſhire*.

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derately expreſſed his approbation of the conſpiracy, and promiſed his concurrence towards its ſucceſs.

1074. THIS nobleman, the laſt of the Engliſh, who, for ſome generations, poſſeſſed any power or authority, had, after his capitulation at York, been received into favour by the Conqueror; had even married Judith, niece to that prince; and had been promoted to the earldoms of Huntingdon and Northampton [q]. Coſpatric, earl of Northumberland, having, on ſome new diſguſt from William, retired into Scotland, where he received the earldom of Dunbar from the bounty of Malcolm; Waltheof was appointed his ſucceſſor in that important command, and ſeemed ſtill to poſſeſs the confidence and friendſhip of his ſovereign [r]. But as he was a man of generous principles, and loved his country, it is probable, that the tyranny exerciſed over the Engliſh lay heavy upon his mind, and deſtroyed all the ſatisfaction, which he could reap from his own grandeur and advancement. When a proſpect, therefore, was opened of retrieving their liberty, he haſtily embraced it; while the fumes of the liquor, and the ardour of the company, prevented him from reflecting on the conſequences of that raſh attempt. But after his cool judgment returned, he foreſaw, that the conſpiracy of thoſe diſcontented barons was not likely to prove ſucceſsful againſt the eſtabliſhed power of William; or if it did, that the ſlavery of the Engliſh, inſtead of being alleviated by that event, would become more grievous, under a multitude of foreign leaders, factious and ambitious, whoſe union and whoſe diſcord would be equally oppreſſive to the people. Tormented with theſe reflections, he opened his mind to his wife, Judith, of whoſe fidelity he entertained no ſuſpicion, but who, having ſecretly fixed her affections on another, took this opportunity of ruining her eaſy and

[q] Order. Vital. p. 522. Hoveden. p. 454. [r] Sim. Dun. p. 205.

credulous

credulous husband. She conveyed intelligence of the conspiracy to the king, and aggravated every circumstance, which, she believed, would tend to enrage him against Waltheof, and render him absolutely implacable [s]. Meanwhile, the earl, still dubious with regard to the part which he should act, discovered the secret in confession to Lanfranc, on whose probity and judgment he had a great reliance: He was persuaded by the prelate, that he owed no fidelity to those rebellious barons, who had by surprise gained his consent to a crime; that his first duty was to his sovereign and benefactor, his next to himself and his family; and that, if he seized not the opportunity of making atonement for his guilt, by revealing it, the temerity of the conspirators was so great, that they would give some other person the means of acquiring the merit of the discovery. Waltheof, convinced by these arguments, went over to Normandy; but, though he was well received by the king, and thanked for his fidelity, the account, previously transmitted by Judith, had sunk deep into William's mind, and had destroyed all the merit of her husband's repentance. 1074.

The conspirators, hearing of Waltheof's departure, immediately concluded their design to be betrayed; and they flew to arms, before their schemes were ripe for execution, and before the arrival of the Danes, in whose aid they placed their chief confidence. The earl of Hereford was checked by Walter de Lacy, a great baron in those parts, who, supported by the bishop of Worcester and the abbot of Evesham, raised some forces, and prevented the earl from passing the Severne, or advancing into the heart of the kingdom. The earl of Norfolk was defeated at Fagadun, near Cambridge, by Odo, the regent, assisted by Richard de Bienfaite, and William de Warrenne, the two justiciaries. The prisoners taken in this action had

[s] Order. Vital. p. 536.

their

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their right foot cut off, as a punishment of their treason: The earl himself escaped to Norwich, thence to Den-

1074. mark; where the Danish fleet, which had made an unsuccessful attempt upon the coast of England [t], soon after arrived, and brought him intelligence, that all his confederates were suppressed, and were either killed, banished, or taken prisoners [u]. Ralph retired in despair to Britanny, where he possessed a large estate, and extensive jurisdictions.

THE king, who hastened over to England, in order to suppress the insurrection, found, that nothing remained but the punishment of the criminals, which he executed with great severity. Many of the rebels were hanged; some had their eyes put out; others their hands cut off. But William, agreeably to his usual maxims, showed more lenity to their leader, the earl of Hereford, who was only condemned to a forfeiture of his estate, and to imprisonment during pleasure. The king seemed even disposed to remit this last part of the punishment; had not Roger, by a fresh insolence, provoked him to render his confinement perpetual. But Waltheof, being an Englishman, was not treated with so much humanity; though his guilt, always much inferior to that of the

1075. other conspirators, was atoned for by an early repentance and return to his duty. William, instigated by his niece, as well as by his rapacious courtiers, who longed for so rich a forfeiture, ordered him to be tried, condemned, and

29th April. executed. The English, who considered this nobleman as the last resource of their nation, grievously lamented his fate, and fancied that miracles were wrought by his reliques, as a testimony of his innocence and sanctity.

[t] Chron. Sax. p. 183. M. Paris, p. 7.

[u] Many of the fugitive Normans are supposed to have fled into Scotland; where they were protected, as well as the fugitive English, by Malcolm. Whence come the many French and Norman families, which are found at present in that country.

The

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The infamous Judith, falling ſoon after under the king's diſpleaſure, was abandoned by all the world, and paſſed the reſt of her life in contempt, remorſe, and miſery. 1075.

NOTHING remained to complete William's ſatisfaction but the puniſhment of Ralph de Guader; and he haſtened over to Normandy, in order to gratify his vengeance on that criminal. But though the conteſt ſeemed very unequal between a private nobleman and the king of England, Ralph was ſo well ſupported both by the earl of Britanny and the King of France, that William, after beſieging him for ſome time in Dol, was obliged to abandon the enterprize, and make with thoſe powerful princes a peace, in which Ralph himſelf was included. England, during his abſence, remained in tranquillity; and nothing remarkable occurred, except two eccleſiaſtical ſynods, which were ſummoned, one at London, another at Wincheſter. In the former, the precedency among the epiſcopal ſees was ſettled, and the ſeat of ſome of them was removed from ſmall villages to the moſt conſiderable town within the dioceſe. In the ſecond was tranſacted a buſineſs of more importance.

1076. Diſpute about inveſtitures.

THE induſtry and perſeverance are ſurpriſing, with which the popes had been treaſuring up powers and pretenſions during ſo many ages of ignorance; while each pontiff employed every fraud for advancing purpoſes of imaginary piety, and cheriſhed all claims which might turn to the advantage of his ſucceſſors, though he himſelf could not expect ever to reap any benefit from them. All this immenſe ſtore of ſpiritual and civil authority was now devolved on Gregory VII. of the name of Hildebrand, the moſt enterpriſing pontiff that had ever filled that chair, and the leaſt reſtrained by fear, decency, or moderation. Not content with ſhaking off the yoke of the emperors, who had hitherto exerciſed the power of appointing the pope on every vacancy, or at leaſt of ratifying

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his election; he undertook the arduous task of entirely disjoining the ecclesiastical from the civil power, and of excluding profane laymen from the right which they had assumed, of filling the vacancies of bishoprics, abbies, and other spiritual dignities [w]. The sovereigns, who had long exercised this power, and who had acquired it, not by encroachments on the church, but on the people, to whom it originally belonged, made great opposition to this claim of the court of Rome; and Henry IV. the reigning emperor, defended this prerogative of his crown with a vigour and resolution suitable to its importance. The few offices, either civil or military, which the feudal institutions left the sovereign the power of bestowing, made the prerogative of conferring the pastoral ring and staff the most valuable jewel of the royal diadem; especially as the general ignorance of the age bestowed a consequence on the ecclesiastical offices, even beyond the great extent of power and property which belonged to them. Superstition, the child of ignorance, invested the clergy with an authority almost sacred; and as they ingrossed the little learning of the age, their interposition became requisite in all civil business, and a real usefulness in common life was thus superadded to the spiritual sanctity of their character.

1076.

When the usurpations, therefore, of the church had come to such maturity as to embolden her to attempt extorting the right of investitures from the temporal power, Europe, especially Italy and Germany, was thrown into the most violent convulsions, and the pope and the emperor waged implacable war on each other. Gregory dared to fulminate the sentence of excommunication against Henry and his adherents, to pronounce him rightfully deposed, to free his subjects from their oaths of allegiance; and,

[w] L'Abbe Conc. tom. 10. p. 371, 372. com. 2. [x] Padre Paolo sopra benef. eccles. p. 30.

instead

1075.

inſtead of ſhocking mankind by this groſs encroachment on the civil authority, he found the ſtupid people ready to ſecond his moſt exorbitant pretenſions. Every miniſter, ſervant, or vaſſal of the emperor, who received any diſguſt, covered his rebellion under the pretence of principle; and even the mother of this monarch, forgetting all the ties of nature, was ſeduced to countenance the inſolence of his enemies. Princes themſelves, not attentive to the pernicious conſequences of thoſe papal claims, employed them for their preſent purpoſes: And the controverſy, ſpreading into every city of Italy, engendered the parties of Guelf and Ghibbelin; the moſt durable and moſt inveterate factions that ever aroſe from the mixture of ambition and religious zeal. Beſides numberleſs aſſaſſinations, tumults, and convulſions, to which they gave riſe, it is computed that the quarrel occaſioned no leſs than ſixty battles in the reign of Henry IV. and eighteen in that of his ſucceſſor, Henry V. when the claims of the ſovereign pontiff finally prevailed [y].

But the bold ſpirit of Gregory, not diſmayed with the vigorous oppoſition, which he met with from the emperor, extended his uſurpations all over Europe; and well knowing the nature of mankind, whoſe blind aſtoniſhment ever inclines them to yield to the moſt impudent pretenſions, he ſeemed determined to ſet no bounds to the ſpiritual, or rather temporal monarchy, which he had undertaken to erect. He pronounced the ſentence of excommunication againſt Nicephorus, emperor of the Eaſt: Robert Guiſcard, the adventurous Norman, who had acquired the dominion of Naples, was attacked by the ſame dangerous weapon: He degraded Boleſlas, king of Poland, from the rank of king; and even deprived Poland of the title of a kingdom: He attempted to treat Philip king of France with the ſame rigour, which he had

[y] Padre Paolo ſopra benef. eccleſ. p. 113.

employed

CHAP. IV. employed againſt the emperor [z]: He pretended to the entire property and dominion of Spain; and he parcelled it out amongſt adventurers, who undertook to conquer it from the Saracens, and to hold it in vaſſalage under the ſee of Rome [a]: Even the Chriſtian biſhops, on whoſe aid he relied for ſubduing the temporal princes, ſaw that he was determined to reduce them to ſervitude; and by aſſuming the whole legiſlative and judicial power of the church, to center all authority in the ſovereign pontiff [b].

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William the Conqueror, the moſt potent, the moſt haughty, and the moſt vigorous prince in Europe, was not, amidſt all his ſplendid ſucceſſes, ſecure from the attacks of this enterprizing pontiff. Gregory wrote him a letter, requiring him to fulfil his promiſe in doing homage for the kingdom of England to the ſee of Rome, and to ſend him over that tribute, which all his predeceſſors had been accuſtomed to pay to the vicar of Chriſt. By the tribute, he meant Peter's pence; which, though at firſt a charitable donation of the Saxon princes, was interpreted, according to the uſual practice of the Romiſh court, to be a badge of ſubjection acknowledged by the kingdom. William replied, that the money ſhould be remitted as uſual; but that neither had he promiſed to do homage to Rome, nor was it in the leaſt his purpoſe to impoſe that ſervitude on his ſtate [c]. And the better to ſhow Gregory his independance, he ventured, notwithſtanding the frequent complaints of the pope, to refuſe to the Engliſh biſhops the liberty of attending a general council, which that pontiff had ſummoned againſt his enemies.

But though the king ſhowed this vigour in ſupporting the royal dignity, he was infected with the general ſuper-

[z] Epiſt. Greg. VII. epiſt. 32, 35. lib. 2. epiſt. 5. [a] Epiſt. Greg. VII. lib. 1. epiſt. 7. [b] Greg. Epiſt. lib. 2. epiſt. 55. [c] Spicileg. Seldeni ad Eadmer, p. 4.

ſtition

ſtition of the age, and he did not perceive the ambitious ſcope of thoſe inſtitutions, which, under colour of ſtrictneſs in religion, were introduced or promoted by the court of Rome. Gregory, while he was throwing all Europe into combuſtion by his violence and impoſtures, affected an anxious care for the purity of manners; and even the chaſte pleaſures of the marriage-bed were inconſiſtent, in his opinion, with the ſanctity of the ſacerdotal character. He had iſſued a decree prohibiting the marriage of prieſts, excommunicating all clergymen who retained their wives, declaring all ſuch unlawful commerce to be fornication, and rendering it criminal in the laity to attend divine worſhip, when ſuch profane prieſts officiated at the altar. This point was a great object in the politics of the Roman pontiffs; and it coſt them infinitely more pains to eſtabliſh it than the propagation of any ſpeculative abſurdity, which they had ever attempted to introduce. Many ſynods were ſummoned in different parts of Europe, before it was finally ſettled; and it was there conſtantly remarked, that the younger clergymen complied chearfully with the pope's decrees in this particular, and that the chief reluctance appeared in thoſe who were more advanced in years: An event ſo little conſonant to men's natural expectations, that it could not fail to be gloſſed on, even in that blind and ſuperſtitious age. William allowed the pope's legate to aſſemble, in his abſence, a ſynod at Wincheſter, in order to eſtabliſh the celibacy of the clergy; but the church of England could not yet be carried the whole length expected. The ſynod was content with decreeing, that the biſhops ſhould not thenceforth ordain any prieſts or deacons without exacting from them a promiſe of celibacy; but they enacted, that none, except thoſe who belonged to collegiate or ca-

[d] Hoveden, p. 455, 457. Flor. Wigorn. p. 638. Spell. Concil. fol. 13. A. D. 1076.

thedral

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thedral churches, ſhould be obliged to ſeparate from their wives.

1076. Revolt of prince Robert.

THE king paſſed ſome years in Normandy; but his long reſidence there was not entirely owing to his declared preference of that dutchy: His preſence was alſo neceſſary for compoſing thoſe diſturbances, which had ariſen in that favourite territory, and which had even originally proceeded from his own family. Robert, his eldeſt ſon, ſirnamed Gambaron or Courthoſe, from his ſhort legs, was a prince, who inherited all the bravery of his family and nation; but without that policy and diſſimulation, by which his father was ſo much diſtinguiſhed, and which, no leſs than his military valour, had contributed to his great ſucceſſes. Greedy of fame, impatient of contradiction, without reſerve in his friendſhips, declared in his enmities, this prince could endure no controul even from his imperious father, and openly aſpired to that independance, to which his temper, as well as ſome circumſtances in his ſituation, ſtrongly invited him [e]. When William firſt received the ſubmiſſions of the province of Maine, he had promiſed the inhabitants, that Robert ſhould be their prince; and before he undertook the expedition againſt England, he had, on the application of the French court, declared him his ſucceſſor in Normandy, and had obliged the barons of that dutchy to do him homage as their future ſovereign. By this artifice, he had endeavoured to appeaſe the jealouſy of his neighbours, as affording them a proſpect of ſeparating England from his dominions on the continent; but when Robert demanded of him the execution of thoſe engagements, he gave him an abſolute refuſal, and told him, according to the homely ſaying, that he never intended to throw off his cloaths, till he went to bed [f].

[e] Order. Vital. p. 545. Hoveden, p. 457. Flor. Wigorn. p. 639.
[f] Chron. de Mailr. p. 160.

Robert

Robert openly declared his diſcontent; and was ſuſpected of ſecretly inſtigating the king of France and the earl of Britanny to the oppoſition, which they made to William, and which had formerly fruſtrated his attempts upon the town of Dol. And as the quarrel ſtill augmented, Robert proceeded to entertain a ſtrong jealouſy of his two ſurviving brothers, William and Henry, (for Richard was killed in hunting, by a ſtag) who, by greater ſubmiſſion and complaiſance, had acquired the affections of their father. In this diſpoſition, on both ſides, the greateſt trifle ſufficed to produce a rupture between them. CHAP. IV. 1076.

THE three princes, reſiding with their father in the caſtle of l'Aigle in Normandy, were one day engaged in ſport together; and after ſome mirth and jollity, the two younger took a fancy of throwing over ſome water on Robert as he paſſed through the court on leaving their apartment [g]; a frolic, which he would naturally have regarded as innocent, had it not been for the ſuggeſtions of Alberic de Grentmeſnil, ſon of that Hugh de Grentmeſnil, whom William had formerly deprived of his fortunes, when that baron deſerted him during his greateſt difficulties in England. The young nobleman, mindful of the injury, perſuaded the prince, that this action was meant as a public affront, which it behoved him in honour to reſent; and the choleric Robert, drawing his ſword, ran up ſtairs, with an intention of taking revenge on his brothers [h]. The whole caſtle was filled with tumult, which the king himſelf, who haſtened from his apartment, found ſome difficulty to appeaſe. But he could by no means appeaſe the reſentment of his eldeſt ſon, who, complaining of his partiality, and fancying that no proper atonement had been made him for the inſult, left the court that very evening, and haſtened to Roüen, with an intention of ſeizing the citadel of that place [i]. But being diſappointed in this view by the precaution and vigilance of Roger

g Order. Vital. p. 545. h Ibid. i Ibid.

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de Ivery, the governor, he fled to Hugh de Neufchatel, a powerful Norman baron, who gave him protection in his caſtles; and he openly levied war againſt his father [k]. The popular character of the prince, and a ſimilarity of manners, engaged all the young nobility of Normandy and Maine, as well as of Anjou and Britanny, to take part with him; and it was ſuſpected that Matilda, his mother, whoſe favourite he was, ſupported him in his rebellion by ſecret remittances of money, and by the encouragement which ſhe gave his partizans.

1076.

1079. All the hereditary provinces of William, as well as his family, were during ſeveral years thrown into convulſions by this war; and he was at laſt obliged to have recourſe to England, where that ſpecies of military government, which he had eſtabliſhed, gave him greater authority than the ancient feudal inſtitutions permitted him to exerciſe in Normandy. He called over an army of Engliſh under his ancient captains, who ſoon expelled Robert and his adherents from their retreats, and reſtored the authority of the ſovereign in all his dominions. The young prince was obliged to take ſhelter in the caſtle of Gerberoy in the Beauvoiſis, which the king of France, who ſecretly fomented all theſe diſſenſions, had provided for him. In this fortreſs he was cloſely beſieged by his father, againſt whom, having a ſtrong garriſon, he made an obſtinate defence. There paſſed under the walls of this place many rencounters, which reſembled more the ſingle combats of chivalry, than the military actions of armies; but one of them was remarkable for its circumſtances and its event. Robert happened to engage the king, who was concealed by his helmet; and both of them being valiant, a fierce combat enſued, till at laſt

[k] Order. Vital. p. 545. Hoveden, p. 457. Sim. Dun. p. 210. Dicето, p. 487.

the young prince wounded his father in the arm, and unhorsed him. On his calling out for assistance, his voice discovered him to his son, who struck with remorse for his past guilt, and astonished with the apprehensions of one much greater, which he had so nearly incurred, instantly threw himself at his father's feet, craved pardon for his offences, and offered to purchase forgiveness by any atonement [1]. The resentment, harboured by William, was so implacable, that he did not immediately correspond to this dutiful submission of his son with like tenderness; but giving him his malediction, departed for his own camp, on Robert's horse, which that prince had assisted him to mount. He soon after raised the siege, and marched with his army to Normandy; where the interposition of the queen and other common friends brought about a reconcilement, which was probably not a little forwarded by the generosity of the son's behaviour in this action, and by the returning sense of his past misconduct. The king seemed so fully appeased, that he even took Robert with him into England; where he intrusted him with the command of an army, in order to repel an inroad of Malcolm king of Scotland, and to retaliate by a like inroad into that country. The English prince was successful, and obliged the enemy to make submissions. The Welsh, unable to resist William's power, were, about the same time, necessitated to pay a compensation for their incursions; and every thing was reduced to full tranquillity in this island.

1679.

THIS state of affairs gave William leisure to begin and finish an undertaking, which proves his extensive genius, and does honour to his memory: It was a general survey of all the lands in the kingdom, their extent in each dis-

1081. Domesday book.

[1] Malmes. p. 106. H. Hunt. p. 369. Hoveden, p. 457. Flor. Wig. p. 639. Sim. Dun. p. 210. Diceto, p. 287. Knyghton, p. 2551. Alur. Beverl. p. 135.

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1081.

trict, their proprietors, tenures, value; the quantity of meadow, paſture, wood, and arable land, which they contained; and in ſome counties the number of tenants, cottagers, and ſlaves of all denominations, who lived upon them. He appointed commiſſioners for this purpoſe, who entered every particular in their regiſter by the verdict of juries; and after a labour of ſix years (for the work was ſo long in finiſhing) brought him an exact account of all the landed property of his kingdom [m]. This monument, called Domeſday-book, the moſt valuable piece of antiquity poſſeſſed by any nation, is ſtill preſerved in the Exchequer; and though only ſome extracts of it have hitherto been publiſhed, it ſerves to illuſtrate to us in many particulars the ancient ſtate of England. The great Alfred had finiſhed a like ſurvey of the kingdom in his time, which was long kept at Wincheſter, and which probably ſerved as a model to William in this undertaking [n].

THE king was naturally a great œconomiſt; and though no prince had ever been more bountiful to his officers and ſervants, it was merely becauſe he had rendered himſelf univerſal proprietor of England, and had a whole kingdom to beſtow. He reſerved an ample revenue for the crown; and in the general diſtribution of land among his followers, he kept poſſeſſion of no leſs than 1422 manors in different parts of England [o], which paid him rent either in money, or in corn, cattle, and the uſual produce of the ſoil. An ancient hiſtorian computes, that his annual fixed income, beſides eſcheats, fines, reliefs, and other caſual profits to a great value, amounted to near 400,000

[m] Chron. Sax. p. 190. Ingulf. p. 79. Chron. T. Tykes, p. 23. H. Hunt. p. 370. Hoveden, p. 450. M. Weſt. p. 229. Flor. Wigorn. p. 641. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 51. M. Paris, p. 8. The more northern counties were not comprehended in this ſurvey; I ſuppoſe becauſe of their wild, uncultivated ſtate.

[n] Ingulf, p. 8.

[o] Weſt's enquiry into the manner of creating peers, p. 24.

400,000 pounds a-year [p]; a ſum, which, if all circumſtances be attended to, will appear wholly incredible. A pound in that age, as we have already obſerved, contained three times the weight of ſilver that it does at preſent; and the ſame weight of ſilver, by the moſt probable computation, would purchaſe near ten times more of the neceſſaries of life, though not in the ſame proportion of the finer manufactures. This revenue, therefore, of William would be equal to at leaſt nine or ten millions at preſent; and as that prince had neither fleet nor army to ſupport, the former being only an occaſional expence, and the latter being maintained, without any charge to him, by his military vaſſals, we muſt thence conclude, that no emperor or prince, in any age or nation, can be compared to the Conqueror for opulence and riches. This leads us to ſuſpect a great miſtake in the computation of the hiſtorian; though, if we conſider that avarice is always imputed to William as one of his vices, and that, having by the ſword rendered himſelf maſter of all the lands in the kingdom, he would certainly in the partition retain a great proportion for his own ſhare; we can ſcarcely be guilty of any error in aſſerting, that perhaps no king of England was ever more opulent, was more able to ſupport by his revenue the ſplendor and magnificence of a court, or could beſtow more on his pleaſures or in liberalities to his ſervants and favourites [q].

The new foreſt.

THERE was one pleaſure, to which William, as well as all the Normans and ancient Saxons, was extremely addicted; and that was hunting: But this pleaſure he indulged more at the expence of his unhappy ſubjects, whoſe intereſts he always diſregarded, than to the loſs or diminution of his own revenue. Not content with thoſe large foreſts, which the former kings poſſeſſed in all parts

[p] Order. Vital. p. 523. He ſays 1060 pounds and ſome odd ſhillings and pence a-day. [q] Forteſcue, de Dom. reg. & politic. cap. 111.

CHAP. IV. 1081.

of England; he resolved to make a new forest near Winchester, the usual place of his residence: And for that purpose, he laid waste the country in Hampshire for an extent of thirty miles, expelled the inhabitants from their houses, seized their property, even demolished churches and convents, and made the sufferers no compensation for the injury [r]. At the same time, he enacted new laws, by which he prohibited all his subjects from hunting in any of his forests, and rendered the penalties more severe than ever had been inflicted for such offences. The killing of a deer or boar, or even a hare, was punished with the loss of the delinquent's eyes; and that at a time, when the killing of a man could be atoned for by paying a mederate fine or composition.

The transactions, recorded during the remainder of this reign, may be considered more as domestic occurrences, which concern the prince, than as national events, which regard England. Odo, bishop of Baieux, the king's uterine brother, whom he had created earl of Kent, and entrusted with a great share of power during his whole reign, had amassed immense riches; and agreeably to the usual progress of human wishes, he began to regard his present acquisitions but as a step to farther grandeur. He had formed the chimerical project of buying the papacy; and though Gregory, the reigning pope, was not of advanced years, the prelate had confided so much in the predictions of an astrologer, that he reckoned upon the pontiff's death, and upon attaining, by his own intrigues and money, that envied state of greatness. Resolving, therefore, to remit all his riches to Italy, he had persuaded many considerable barons, and among the rest, Hugh earl of Chester, to take the same course; in hopes, that, when he should mount the papal throne, he would bestow on them more considerable establishments in that

[r] Malmes. p. 3. H. Hunt. p. 731. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 2 3

country.

country. The king, from whom all theſe projects had been carefully concealed, at laſt got intelligence of the deſign, and ordered Odo to be arreſted. His officers, from reſpect to the immunities, which the eccleſiaſtics now aſſumed, ſcrupled to execute the command, till the king himſelf was obliged in perſon to ſeize him; and when Odo inſiſted that he was a prelate, and exempt from all temporal juriſdiction, William replied, that he arreſted him, not as biſhop of Baieux, but as earl of Kent. He was ſent priſoner to Normandy; and notwithſtanding the remonſtrances and menaces of Gregory, was detained in cuſtody during the remainder of this reign. CHAP. IV. 1082.

ANOTHER domeſtic event gave the king much more concern: It was the death of Matilda, his conſort, whom he tenderly loved, and for whom he had ever preſerved the moſt ſincere friendſhip. Three years afterwards he paſſed into Normandy, and carried with him Edgar Atheling, to whom he willingly granted permiſſion to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He was detained on the continent by a miſunderſtanding, which broke out between him and the king of France, and which was occaſioned by inroads made into Normandy by ſome French barons on the frontiers. It was little in the power of princes at that time to reſtrain their licentious nobility; but William ſuſpected, that theſe barons durſt not have provoked his indignation, had they not been aſſured of the countenance and protection of Philip. His diſpleaſure was encreaſed by the account he received of ſome railleries which that monarch had thrown out againſt him. William, who was become corpulent, had been detained in bed ſome time by ſickneſs; upon which Philip expreſſed his ſurpriſe that his brother of England ſhould be ſo long in being delivered of his big belly. The king ſent him word, that, as ſoon as he was up, he would 1083. 1087. War with France.

CHAP. IV.

1087. preſent ſo many lights at Notre-dame, as would perhaps give little pleaſure to the king of France; alluding to the uſual practice at that time of women after child-birth. Immediately on his recovery, he led an army into the L'Iſle de France, and laid every thing waſte with fire and ſword. He took the town of Mante, which he reduced to aſhes. But the progreſs of theſe hoſtilities was ſtopped by an accident, which ſoon after put an end to William's life. His horſe ſtarting aſide of a ſudden, he bruiſed his belly on the pommel of the ſaddle; and being in a bad habit of body, as well as ſomewhat advanced in years, he begān to apprehend the conſequences, and ordered himſelf to be carried in a litter to the monaſtery of St. Gervas. Finding his illneſs encreaſe, and being ſenſible of the approach of death, he diſcovered at laſt the vanity of all human grandeur, and was ſtruck with remorſe for thoſe horrible cruelties and acts of violence, which, in the attainment and defence of it, he had committed during the courſe of his reign over England. He endeavoured to make atonement by preſents to churches and monaſteries; and he iſſued orders, that earl Morcar, Siward Bearne, and other Engliſh priſoners, ſhould be ſet at liberty. He was even prevailed on, though not without reluctance, to conſent, with his dying breath, to releaſe his brother, Odo, againſt whom he was extremely incenſed. He left Normandy and Maine to his eldeſt ſon, Robert: He wrote to Lanfranc, deſiring him to crown William king of England: He bequeathed to Henry nothing but the poſſeſſions of his mother, Matilda; but foretold, that he would one day ſurpaſs both his brothers in power and opulence. He expired in the ſixty-third year of his age, in the twenty-firſt year of his reign over England, and in the fifty-fourth of that over Normandy.

9th Sept. Death

and character of William the Conqueror.

FEW princes have been more fortunate than this great monarch, or were better entitled to grandeur and proſperity,

rity, from the abilities and the vigour of mind which he displayed in all his conduct. His spirit was bold and enterprising, yet guided by prudence: His ambition, which was exorbitant, and lay little under the restraints of justice, and still less under those of humanity, ever submitted to the dictates of sound policy. Born in an age when the minds of men were intractable and unacquainted with submission, he was yet able to direct them to his purposes; and partly from the ascendant of his vehement character, partly from art and dissimulation, to establish an unlimited authority. Though not insensible to generosity, he was hardened against compassion; and he seemed equally ostentatious and equally ambitious of show and parade in his clemency and in his severity. The maxims of his administration were austere; but might have been useful, had they been solely employed to preserve order in an established government[s]: They were ill calculated for softening the rigours, which, under the most gentle management, are inseparable from conquest. His attempt against England was the last great enterprize of the kind, which, during the course of seven hundred years, has fully succeeded in Europe; and the force of his genius broke through those limits, which first the feudal institutions, then the refined policy of princes, have fixed to the several states of Christendom. Though he rendered himself infinitely odious to his English subjects, he transmitted his power to his posterity, and the throne is still filled by his descendants: A proof, that the foundations which he laid were firm and solid, and that, amidst all his violence, while he seemed only to gratify the present passion, he had still an eye towards futurity.

Some writers have been desirous of refusing to this prince the title of Conqueror, in the sense which that

[s] M. West. p. 230. Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p. 258.

term

CHAP. IV. 1087.

term commonly bears; and on pretence, that the word is ſometimes in old books applied to ſuch as make an acquiſition of territory by any means, they are willing to reject William's title, by right of war, to the crown of England. It is needleſs to enter into a controverſy, which, by the terms of it, muſt neceſſarily degenerate into a diſpute of words. It ſuffices to ſay, that the duke of Normandy's firſt invaſion of the iſland was hoſtile; that his ſubſequent adminiſtration was entirely ſupported by arms; that in the very frame of his laws he made a diſtinction between the Normans and Engliſh, to the advantage of the former [t]; that he acted in every thing as abſolute maſter over the natives, whoſe intereſts and affections he totally diſregarded; and that if there was an interval when he aſſumed the appearance of a legal ſovereign, the period was very ſhort, and was nothing but a temporary ſacrifice, which he, as has been the caſe with moſt conquerors, was obliged to make, of his inclination to his preſent policy. Scarce any of thoſe revolutions, which, both in hiſtory and in common language, have always been denominated conqueſts, appear equally violent, or were attended with ſo ſudden an alteration both of power and property. The Roman ſtate, which ſpread its dominion over Europe, left the rights of individuals, in a great meaſure, untouched; and thoſe civilized conquerors, while they made their own country the ſeat of empire, found, that they could draw moſt advantage from the ſubjected provinces, by ſecuring to the natives the free enjoyment of their own laws and of their private poſſeſſions. The barbarians, who ſubdued the Roman empire, though they ſettled in the conquered countries, yet being accuſtomed to a rude uncultivated life, found a ſmall part of the land ſufficient to ſupply all their wants; and they were not tempted to ſeize extenſive poſſeſſions, which they neither

[t] Hoveden, p. 600.

knew

knew how to cultivate nor enjoy. But the Normans and other foreigners, who followed the ſtandard of William, while they made the vanquiſhed kingdom the ſeat of government, were yet ſo far advanced in arts as to be acquainted with the advantages of a large property; and having totally ſubdued the natives, they puſhed the rights of conqueſt (very extenſive in the eyes of avarice and ambition, however narrow in thoſe of reaſon) to the utmoſt extremity againſt them. Except the former conqueſt of England by the Saxons themſelves, who were induced, by peculiar circumſtances, to proceed even to the extermination of the natives, it would be difficult to find in all hiſtory a revolution more deſtructive, or attended with a more complete ſubjection of the ancient inhabitants. Contumely ſeems even to have been wantonly added to oppreſſion [u]; and the natives were univerſally reduced to ſuch a ſtate of meanneſs and poverty, that the Engliſh name became a term of reproach; and ſeveral generations elapſed before one family of Saxon pedigree was raiſed to any conſiderable honours, or could ſo much as attain the rank of baron of the realm [w]. Theſe facts are ſo apparent from the whole tenor of the Engliſh hiſtory, that none would have been tempted to deny or elude them, were they not heated by the controverſies of faction; while one party was *abſurdly* afraid of thoſe *abſurd* conſequences, which they ſaw the other party inclined to draw from this event. But it is evident, that the preſent rights and privileges of the people, who are a mixture of Engliſh and Normans, can never be affected by a tranſaction, which paſſed ſeven hundred years ago; and as all

CHAP. IV. 1087.

[u] H. Hunt. p. 370. Brompton, p. 980.

[w] So late as the reign of king Stephen, the earl of Albemarle, before the battle of the Standard, addreſſed the officers of his army in theſe terms, *Proceres Angliæ clariſſimi, & genere Normanni, &c.* Brompton, p. 1026. See farther Abbas Rieval. p. 309, &c. All the barons and military men of England ſtill called themſelves Normans.

ancient

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ancient authors *, who lived neareſt the time, and beſt knew the ſtate of the country, unanimouſly ſpeak of the Norman dominion as a conqueſt by war and arms, no reaſonable man, from the fear of imaginary conſequences, will ever be tempted to reject their concurring and undoubted teſtimony.

KING William had iſſue, beſides his three ſons, who ſurvived him, five daughters, to wit, (1.) Cicily, a nun in the monaſtery of Feſchamp, afterwards abbeſs in the holy Trinity at Caen, where ſhe died in 1127. (2.) Conſtantia, married to Alan Fergant, earl of Britanny. She died without iſſue. (3.) Alice, contracted to Harold. (4.) Adela, married to Stephen, earl of Blois, by whom ſhe had four ſons, William, Theobald, Henry, and Stephen; of whom the elder was neglected, on account of the imbecillity of his underſtanding. (5.) Agatha, who died a virgin, but was betrothed to the king of Gallicia. She died on her journey thither, before ſhe joined her bridegroom.

* See note [L] at the end of the volume.

CHAP. V.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

Acceſſion of William Rufus —— Conſpiracy againſt the King —— Invaſion of Normandy —— The Cruſades —— Acquiſition of Normandy —— Quarrel with Anſelm, the primate —— Death —— and character of William Rufus.

WILLIAM, ſirnamed *Rufus* or the *Red*, from the colour of his hair, had no ſooner procured his father's recommendatory letter to Lanfranc, the primate, than he haſtened to take meaſures for ſecuring to himſelf the government of England. Senſible, that a deed ſo unformal, and ſo little prepared, which violated Robert's right of primogeniture, might meet with great oppoſition, he truſted entirely for ſucceſs to his own celerity; and having left St. Gervais, while William was breathing his laſt, he arrived in England, before intelligence of his father's death had reached that kingdom [x]. Pretending orders from the king, he ſecured the fortreſſes of Dover, Pevenſey, and Haſtings, whoſe ſituation rendered them of the greateſt importance; and he got poſſeſſion of the royal treaſure at Wincheſter, amounting to the ſum of ſixty thouſand pounds, by which he hoped to encourage and encreaſe his partizans [y]. The primate, whoſe rank and reputation in the kingdom gave him great authority, had been entruſted with the care of his education, and had conferred on him the honour of knighthood [z]; and being connected with him by theſe ties, and

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Acceſſion of William Rufus.

[x] W. Malmeſ. p. 120. M. Paris, p. 10. Brompton, p. 983. Thom. Rudborne, p. 263.

[y] Chron. Sax. p. 192.

[z] W. Malmeſ. p. 120. M. Paris, p. 10.

probably

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1087. probably deeming his pretenſions juſt, declared that he would pay a willing obedience to the laſt will of the Conqueror, his friend and benefactor. Having aſſembled ſome biſhops and ſome of the principal nobility, he inſtantly proceeded to the ceremony of crowning the new king [a]; and by this diſpatch endeavoured to prevent all faction and reſiſtance. At the ſame time, Robert, who had been already acknowledged ſucceſſor to Normandy, took peaceable poſſeſſion of that dutchy.

Conſpiracy againſt the king.

But though this partition appeared to have been made without any violence or oppoſition, there remained in England many cauſes of diſcontent, which ſeemed to menace that kingdom with a ſudden revolution. The barons, who generally poſſeſſed large eſtates both in England and in Normandy, were uneaſy at the ſeparation of thoſe territories; and foreſaw, that, as it would be impoſſible for them to preſerve long their allegiance to two maſters, they muſt neceſſarily reſign either their ancient patrimony or their new acquiſitions [b]. Robert's title to the dutchy they eſteemed inconteſtible; his claim to the kingdom plauſible; and they all deſired that this prince, who alone had any pretenſions to unite theſe ſtates, ſhould be put in poſſeſſion of both. A compariſon alſo of the perſonal qualities of the two brothers led them to give the preference to the elder. The duke was brave, open, ſincere, generous: Even his predominant faults, his extreme indolence and facility, were not diſagreeable to thoſe haughty barons, who affected independance, and ſubmitted with reluctance to a vigorous adminiſtration in their ſovereign. The king, though equally brave, was violent, haughty, tyrannical; and ſeemed diſpoſed to govern more by the fear than by the love of his people. Odo, biſhop of Baieux, and Robert earl of Mortaigne, maternal brothers of the Conqueror, envying the great credit

[a] Hoveden, p. 461. [b] Order. Vitalis, p. 666.

of

of Lanfranc, which was encreaſed by his late ſervices, enforced all theſe motives with their partizans, and engaged them in a formal conſpiracy to dethrone the king. They communicated their deſign to Euſtace, count of Bologne, Roger earl of Shrewſbury and Arundel, Robert de Beleſme, his eldeſt ſon, William biſhop of Durham, Robert de Moubray, Roger Bigod, Hugh de Grentmeſnil; and they eaſily procured the aſſent of theſe potent noblemen. The conſpirators, retiring to their caſtles, haſtened to put themſelves in a military poſture; and expecting to be ſoon ſupported by a powerful army from Normandy, they had already begun hoſtilities in many places. CHAP. V. 1087.

THE king, ſenſible of his perilous ſituation, endeavoured to engage the affections of the native Engliſh. As that people were now ſo thoroughly ſubdued that they no longer aſpired to the recovery of their ancient liberties, and were content with the proſpect of ſome mitigation in the tyranny of the Norman princes, they zealouſly embraced William's cauſe, upon receiving general promiſes of good treatment, and of enjoying the licence of hunting in the royal foreſts. The king was ſoon in a ſituation to take the field; and as he knew the danger of delay, he ſuddenly marched into Kent; where his uncles had already ſeized the fortreſſes of Pevenſey and Rocheſter. Theſe places he ſucceſſively reduced by famine; and though he was prevailed on by the earl of Cheſter, William de Warrenne, and Robert Fitz Hamon, who had embraced his cauſe, to ſpare the lives of the rebels, he confiſcated all their eſtates, and baniſhed them the kingdom [c]. This ſucceſs gave authority to his negotiations with Roger earl of Shrewſbury, whom he detached from the confederates: And as his powerful fleet, joined to the indolent conduct of Robert, prevented the

[c] Chron. Sax. p. 195. Order. Vital, p. 663.

arrival

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arrival of the Norman ſuccours, all the other rebels found no reſource but in flight or ſubmiſſion. Some of them

1087. received a pardon; but the greater part were attainted; and the king beſtowed their eſtates on the Norman barons, who had remained faithful to him.

1089. WILLIAM, freed from the danger of theſe inſurrections, took little care of fulfilling his promiſes to the Engliſh, who ſtill found themſelves expoſed to the ſame oppreſſions, which they had undergone during the reign of the Conqueror, and which were rather augmented by the violent, impetuous temper of the preſent monarch. The death of Lanfranc, who retained great influence over him, gave ſoon after a full career to his tyranny; and all orders of men found reaſon to complain of an arbitrary and illegal adminiſtration. Even the privileges of the church, held ſacred in thoſe days, were a feeble rampart againſt his uſurpations. He ſeized the temporalities of all the vacant biſhoprics and abbies; he delayed the appointing of ſucceſſors to thoſe dignities, that he might the longer enjoy the profits of their revenue; he beſtowed ſome of the church-lands in property on his captains and favourites; and he openly ſet to ſale ſuch ſees and abbies as he thought proper to diſpoſe of. Though the murmurs of the eccleſiaſtics, which were quickly propagated to the nation, roſe high againſt this grievance, the terror of William's authority, confirmed by the ſuppreſſion of the late inſurrections, retained every one in ſubjection, and preſerved general tranquillity in England.

1090. Invaſion of Normandy.

THE king even thought himſelf enabled to diſturb his brother in the poſſeſſion of Normandy. The looſe and negligent adminiſtration of that prince had emboldened the Norman barons to affect a great independancy; and their mutual quarrels and devaſtations had rendered that

whole

whole territory a ſcene of violence and outrage. Two of them, Walter and Odo, were bribed by William to deliver the fortreſſes of St. Valori and Albemarle into his hands: Others ſoon after imitated the example; while Philip, king of France, who ought to have protected his vaſſal in the poſſeſſion of his fief, was, after making ſome efforts in his favour, engaged by large preſents to remain neuter. The duke had alſo reaſon to apprehend danger from the intrigues of his brother Henry. This young prince, who had inherited nothing of his father's great poſſeſſions but ſome of his money, had furniſhed Robert, while he was making his preparations againſt England, with the ſum of three thouſand marks; and in return for ſo ſlender a ſupply, had been put in poſſeſſion of the Cotentin, which comprehended near a third of the dutchy of Normandy. Robert afterwards upon ſome ſuſpicion threw him into priſon; but finding himſelf expoſed to invaſion from the king of England, and dreading the conjunction of the two brothers againſt him, he now gave Henry his liberty, and even made uſe of his aſſiſtance in ſuppreſſing the inſurrections of his rebellious ſubjects. Conan, a rich burgeſs of Roüen, had entered into a conſpiracy to deliver that city to William; but Henry, on the detection of his guilt, carried the traitor up to a high tower, and with his own hands flung him from the battlements. 1089.

The king appeared in Normandy at the head of an army; and affairs ſeemed to have come to extremity between the brothers; when the nobility on both ſides, ſtrongly connected by intereſt and alliances, interpoſed and mediated an accommodation. The chief advantage of this treaty accrued to William, who obtained poſſeſſion of the territory of Eu, the towns of Aumale, Feſcamp, and other places: But in return he promiſed, that he would aſſiſt his brother in ſubduing Maine, which had rebelled; and that the Norman barons, attainted in Robert's

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bert's cauſe, ſhould be reſtored to their eſtates in England. The two brothers alſo ſtipulated, that, on the demiſe of either without iſſue, the ſurvivor ſhould inherit all his dominions; and twelve of the moſt powerful barons on each ſide ſwore, that they would employ their power to inſure the effectual execution of the whole treaty [d]: A ſtrong proof of the great independance and authority of the nobles in thoſe ages!

PRINCE Henry, diſguſted, that ſo little care had been taken of his intereſts in this accommodation, retired to St. Michael's Mount, a ſtrong fortreſs on the coaſt of Normandy, and infeſted the neighbourhood with his incurſions. Robert and William with their joint forces beſieged him in this place, and had nearly reduced him by the ſcarcity of water; when the elder, hearing of his diſtreſs, granted him permiſſion to ſupply himſelf, and alſo ſent him ſome pipes of wine for his own table. Being reproved by William for this ill-timed generoſity, he replied, *What, ſhall I ſuffer my brother to die of thirſt? Where ſhall we find another, when he is gone?* The king alſo, during this ſiege, performed an act of generoſity, which was leſs ſuitable to his character. Riding out one day alone, to take a ſurvey of the fortreſs, he was attacked by two ſoldiers, and diſmounted. One of them drew his ſword in order to diſpatch him; when the king exclaimed, *Hold knave! I am the king of England.* The ſoldier ſuſpended his blow; and raiſing the king from the ground, with expreſſions of reſpect, received a handſome reward, and was taken into his ſervice. Prince Henry was ſoon after obliged to capitulate; and being deſpoiled of all his patrimony, wandered about for ſome time with very few attendants, and often in great poverty.

[d] Chron. Sax. p. 197. W. Malm. p. 121. Hoveden, p. 462. M. Paris, p. 11. Annal. Waverl. p. 137. W. Heming. p. 463. Sim. Dunelm. p. 216. Brompton, p. 986.

THE

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THE continued inteſtine diſcord among the barons was alone in that age deſtructive: The public wars were commonly ſhort and feeble, produced little bloodſhed, and were attended with no memorable event. To this Norman war, which was ſo ſoon concluded, there ſucceeded hoſtilities with Scotland, which were not of longer duration. Robert here commanded his brother's army, and obliged Malcolm to accept of peace and do homage to the crown of England. This peace was not more durable. Malcolm, two years after, levying an army, invaded England; and after ravaging Northumberland, he laid ſiege to Alnwic, where a party of earl Moubray's troops falling upon him by ſurprize, a ſharp action enſued, in which Malcolm was ſlain. This incident interrupted for ſome years the regular ſucceſſion to the Scottiſh crown. Though Malcolm left legitimate ſons, his brother, Donald, on account of the youth of theſe princes, was advanced to the throne; but kept not long poſſeſſion of it. Duncan, natural ſon of Malcolm, formed a conſpiracy againſt him; and being aſſiſted by William with a ſmall force, made himſelf maſter of the kingdom. New broils enſued with Normandy. The frank, open, remiſs temper of Robert was ill fitted to withſtand the intereſted, rapacious character of William, who, being ſupported by greater power, was ſtill encroaching on his brother's poſſeſſions, and inſtigating his turbulent barons to rebellion againſt him. The king, having gone over to Normandy to ſupport his partizans, ordered an army of twenty thouſand men to be levied in England, and to be conducted to the ſea-coaſt, as if they were inſtantly to be embarked. Here Ralph Flambard, the king's miniſter, and the chief inſtrument of his extortions, exacted ten ſhillings a-piece from them, in lieu of their ſervice, and then diſmiſſed them into their ſeveral counties. This money was ſo ſkilfully employed by William, that it rendered him bet-

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ter ſervice than he could have expected from the army. He engaged the French king by new preſents to depart
1094. from the protection of Robert; and he daily bribed the Norman barons to deſert his ſervice: But was prevented from puſhing his advantages by an incurſion of the Welſh, which obliged him to return to England. He found no difficulty in repelling the enemy; but was not able to make any conſiderable impreſſion on a country, guarded by its mountainous ſituation. A conſpiracy of his own barons, which was detected at this time, appeared a more
1095. ſerious concern, and engroſſed all his attention. Robert Moubray, earl of Northumberland, was at the head of this combination; and he engaged in it the count d'Eu, Richard de Tunbrige, Roger de Lacey, and many others. The purpoſe of the conſpirators was to dethrone the king, and to advance in his ſtead, Stephen, count of Aumale, nephew to the Conqueror. William's diſpatch prevented the deſign from taking effect, and diſconcerted the conſpirators. Moubray made ſome reſiſtance; but being taken priſoner, was attainted, and thrown into confinement, where he died about thirty years after. The
1096. count d'Eu denied his concurrence in the plot; and to juſtify himſelf, fought, in the preſence of the court at Windſor, a duel with Geoffrey Bainard, who accuſed him. But being worſted in the combat, he was condemned to be caſtrated, and to have his eyes put out. William de Alderi, another conſpirator, was ſuppoſed to be treated with more rigour, when he was ſentenced to be hanged.

The Cruſades.

BUT the noiſe of theſe petty wars and commotions was quite ſunk in the tumult of the Cruſades, which now engroſſed the attention of Europe, and have ever ſince engaged the curioſity of mankind, as the moſt ſignal and moſt durable monument of human folly, that has yet appeared in any age or nation. After Mahomet had, by

means of his pretended revelations, united the diſperſed Arabians under one head, they iſſued forth from their deſarts in great multitudes; and being animated with zeal for their new religion, and ſupported by the vigour of their new government, they made deep impreſſion on the eaſtern empire, which was far in the decline, with regard both to military diſcipline and to civil policy. Jeruſalem, by its ſituation, became one of their moſt early conqueſts; and the Chriſtians had the mortification to ſee the holy ſepulchre, and the other places, conſecrated by the preſence of their religious founder, fallen into the poſſeſſion of infidels. But the Arabians or Saracens were ſo employed in military enterprizes, by which they ſpread their empire, in a few years, from the banks of the Ganges, to the Streights of Gibraltar, that they had no leiſure for theological controverſy: And though the Alcoran, the original monument of their faith, ſeems to contain ſome violent precepts, they were much leſs infected with the ſpirit of bigotry and perſecution than the indolent and ſpeculative Greeks, who were continually refining on the ſeveral articles of their religious ſyſtem. They gave little diſturbance to thoſe zealous pilgrims, who daily flocked to Jeruſalem; and they allowed every man, after paying a moderate tribute, to viſit the holy ſepulchre, to perform his religious duties, and to return in peace. But the Turcomans or Turks, a tribe of Tartars, who had embraced Mahometaniſm, having wreſted Syria from the Saracens, and having in the year 1065, made themſelves maſters of Jeruſalem, rendered the pilgrimage much more difficult and dangerous to the Chriſtians. The barbarity of their manners, and the confuſions attending their unſettled government, expoſed the pilgrims to many inſults, robberies, and extortions; and theſe zealots, returning from their meritorious fatigues and ſufferings, filled all Chriſtendom with indigna-

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tion againſt the infidels, who profaned the holy city by their preſence, and derided the ſacred myſteries in the very place of their completion. Gregory VII. among the other vaſt ideas which he entertained, had formed the deſign of uniting all the weſtern Chriſtians againſt the Mahometans; but the egregious and violent invaſions of that pontiff on the civil power of princes, had created him ſo many enemies, and had rendered his ſchemes ſo ſuſpicious, that he was not able to make great progreſs in this undertaking. The work was reſerved for a meaner inſtrument, whoſe low condition in life expoſed him to no jealouſy, and whoſe folly was well calculated to coincide with the prevailing principles of the times.

PETER, commonly called the Hermit, a native of Amiens in Picardy, had made the pilgrimage to Jeruſalem. Being deeply affected with the dangers, to which that act of piety now expoſed the pilgrims, as well as with the inſtances of oppreſſion, under which the eaſtern Chriſtians laboured, he entertained the bold, and in all appearance, impracticable project of leading into Aſia, from the fartheſt extremities of the weſt, armies ſufficient to ſubdue thoſe potent and warlike nations, which now held the holy city in ſlavery and ſubjection [e]. He propoſed his views to Martin II. who filled the papal chair, and who, though ſenſible of the advantages, which the head of the Chriſtian religion muſt reap from a religious war, and though he eſteemed the blind zeal of Peter a proper means for effecting the purpoſe [f], reſolved not to interpoſe his authority, till he ſaw a greater probability of ſucceſs. He ſummoned a council at Placentia, which conſiſted of four thouſand eccleſiaſtics and thirty thouſand ſeculars; and which was ſo numerous, that no hall could contain the multitude, and it was

[e] Gul. Tyrius, lib. i. cap. 11. M. Paris, p. 17. [f] Gul. Tyrius, lib. i. cap. 13.

neceſſary

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neceſſary to hold the aſſembly in a plain. The harangues of the pope, and of Peter himſelf, repreſenting the diſmal ſituation of their brethren in the eaſt, and the indignity, ſuffered by the Chriſtian name, in allowing the holy city to remain in the hands of infidels, here found the minds of men ſo well prepared, that the whole multitude, ſuddenly and violently, declared for the war, and ſolemnly devoted themſelves to perform this ſervice, ſo meritorious, as they believed it, to God and religion.

BUT though Italy ſeemed thus to have zealouſly embraced the deſign, Martin knew, that, in order to inſure ſucceſs, it was neceſſary to inſpire the greater and more warlike nations in the ſame engagement; and having previouſly exhorted Peter to viſit the chief cities and ſovereigns of Chriſtendom, he ſummoned another council at Clermont in Auvergne [g]. The fame of this great and pious deſign, being now univerſally diffuſed, procured the attendance of the greateſt prelates, nobles, and princes; and when the pope and the hermit renewed their pathetic exhortations, the whole aſſembly, as if impelled by an immediate inſpiration, not moved by their preceding impreſſions, exclaimed with one voice, *It is the will of God, It is the will of God:* Words deemed ſo memorable, and ſo much the reſult of a divine influence, that they were employed as the ſignal of rendezvous and battle in all the future exploits of thoſe adventurers [h]. Men of all ranks flew to arms with the utmoſt ardour; and an exterior ſymbol too, a circumſtance of chief moment, was here choſen by the devoted combatants. The ſign of the croſs, which had been hitherto ſo much revered among Chriſtians, and which, the more it was an object of reproach to the pagan world, was the more paſſionately cheriſhed by them, became the badge

[g] Concil. tom. x. Concil. Clarom. Matth. Paris, p. 16. M. Weſt. p. 233.
[h] Hiſtoria Bell. Sacri, tom. i. Muſei Ital.

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of union, and was affixed to their right ſhoulder, by all who enliſted themſelves in this ſacred warfare [i].

1096. EUROPE was at this time ſunk into profound ignorance and ſuperſtition: The eccleſiaſtics had acquired the greateſt aſcendant over the human mind: The people, who, being little reſtrained by honour and leſs by law, abandoned themſelves to the worſt crimes and diſorders, knew of no other expiation than the obſervances impoſed on them by their ſpiritual paſtors: And it was eaſy to repreſent the holy war as an equivalent for all penances [k], and an atonement for every violation of juſtice and humanity. But amidſt the abject ſuperſtition, which now prevailed, the military ſpirit alſo had univerſally diffuſed itſelf; and though not ſupported by art or diſcipline, was become the general paſſion of the nations, governed by the feudal law. All the great lords poſſeſſed the right of peace and war: They were engaged in perpetual hoſtilities with each other: The open country was become a ſcene of outrage and diſorder: The cities, ſtill mean and poor, were neither guarded by walls, nor protected by privileges, and were expoſed to every inſult: Individuals were obliged to depend for ſafety on their own force, or their private alliances: And valour was the only excellence, which was held in eſteem, or gave one man the pre-eminence above another. When all the particular ſuperſtitions, therefore, were here united in one great object, the ardour for military enterprizes took the ſame direction; and Europe, impelled by its two ruling paſſions, was looſened, as it were, from its foundations, and ſeemed to precipitate itſelf in one united body upon the eaſt.

ALL orders of men, deeming the cruſades the only road to heaven, inliſted themſelves under theſe ſacred

[i] Hiſt. Bell. Sacri, tom. 1. Muſ. Ital. Order. Vital. p. 721. [k] Order. Vital. p. 720.

banners,

banners, and were impatient to open the way with their sword to the holy city. Nobles, artizans, peasants, even priests [l] inrolled their names; and to decline this meritorious service was branded with the reproach of impiety, or what perhaps was esteemed still more disgraceful, of cowardice and pusillanimity [m]. The infirm and aged contributed to the expedition by presents and money; and many of them, not satisfied with the merit of this atonement, attended it in person, and were determined, if possible, to breathe their last, in sight of that city where their Saviour had died for them. Women themselves, concealing their sex under the disguise of armour, attended the camp; and commonly forgot still more the duty of their sex, by prostituting themselves, without reserve, to the army [n]. The greatest criminals were forward in a service, which they regarded as a propitiation for all crimes; and the most enormous disorders were, during the course of those expeditions, committed by men, enured to wickedness, encouraged by example, and impelled by necessity. The multitude of the adventurers soon became so great, that their more sagacious leaders, Hugh count of Vermandois, brother to the French king, Raymond count of Tholouse, Godfrey of Boüillon, prince of Brabant, and Stephen count of Blois [o], became apprehensive lest the greatness itself of the armament should disappoint its purpose; and they permitted an undisciplined multitude, computed at 300,000 men, to go before them, under the command of Peter the Hermit, and Walter the Moneyless [p]. These men took the road towards Constantinople through Hungary and Bulgaria; and trusting, that heaven, by supernatural assistance, would supply all their necessities, they

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[l] Order. Vital. p. 720. [m] W. Malm. p. 133. [n] Vertot Hist. de Chev. de Malte, vol. i. p. 46. [o] Sim. Dunelm. p. 222. [p] Matth. Paris, p. 17.

made

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1096. made no provision for subsistance on their march. They soon found themselves obliged to obtain by plunder what they had vainly expected from miracles; and the enraged inhabitants of the countries through which they passed, gathering together in arms, attacked the disorderly multitude, and put them to slaughter without resistance. The more disciplined armies followed after; and passing the streights at Constantinople, they were mustered in the plains of Asia, and amounted in the whole to the number of 700,000 combatants [q].

Amidst this universal frenzy, which spread itself by contagion throughout Europe, especially in France and Germany, men were not entirely forgetful of their present interests; and both those who went on this expedition, and those who stayed behind, entertained schemes of gratifying, by its means, their avarice or their ambition. The nobles who enlisted themselves were moved, from the romantic spirit of the age, to hope for opulent establishments in the east, the chief seat of arts and commerce during those ages; and in pursuit of these chimerical projects, they sold at the lowest price their ancient castles and inheritances, which had now lost all value in their eyes. The greater princes, who remained at home, besides establishing peace in their dominions by giving occupation abroad to the inquietude and martial disposition of their subjects, took the opportunity of annexing to their crown many considerable fiefs, either by purchase or by the extinction of heirs. The pope frequently turned the zeal of the crusaders from the infidels against his own enemies, whom he represented as equally criminal with the enemies of Christ. The convents and other religious societies bought the possessions of the adventurers; and as the contributions of the faithful were commonly entrusted to their management, they

[q] Matth. Paris, p. 20, 21.

often

often diverted to this purpose what was intended to be employed against the infidels [r]. But no one was a more immediate gainer by this epidemic fury than the king of England, who kept aloof from all connections with those fanatical and romantic warriors. CHAP. V. 1096.

Acquisition of Normandy.

ROBERT, duke of Normandy, impelled by the bravery and mistaken generosity of his spirit, had early inlisted himself in the crusade; but being always unprovided with money, he found, that it would be impracticable for him to appear in a manner suitable to his rank and station, at the head of his numerous vassals and subjects, who, transported with the general rage, were determined to follow him into Asia. He resolved, therefore, to mortgage or rather to sell his dominions, which he had not talents to govern; and he offered them to his brother William, for the very unequal sum of ten thousand marks [s]. The bargain was soon concluded: The king raised the money by violent extortions on his subjects of all ranks, even on the convents, who were obliged to melt their plate in order to furnish the quota demanded of them [t]: He was put in possession of Normandy and Maine: and Robert, providing himself with a magnificent train, set out for the holy land, in pursuit of glory, and in full confidence of securing his eternal salvation.

THE smallness of this sum, with the difficulties which William found in raising it, suffices alone to refute the account which is heedlessly adopted by historians, of the enormous revenue of the conqueror. Is it credible, that Robert would consign to the rapacious hands of his

[r] Padre Paolo Hist. delle benef. ecclesiast. p. 128.

[s] W. Malm. p. 123. Chron. T. Wykes, p. 24. Annal. Waverl. p. 139. W. Hemming p. 467. Flor. Wig. p. 648. Sim. Dunelm. p. 222. Knyghton, p. 2364.

[t] Eadmer, p. 35. W. Malm. p. 123. W. Hemming, p. 467.

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1096. brother such considerable dominions, for a sum, which, according to that account, made not a week's income of his father's English revenue alone? Or that the king of England could not on demand, without oppressing his subjects, have been able to pay him the money? The conqueror, it is agreed, was frugal as well as rapacious; yet his treasure, at his death, exceeded not 60,000 pounds, which hardly amounted to his income for two months: Another certain refutation of that exaggerated account.

THE fury of the crusades, during this age, less infected England than the neighbouring kingdoms; probably because the Norman conquerors, finding their settlement in that kingdom still somewhat precarious, durst not abandon their own houses, in quest of distant adventures. The selfish interested humour also of the king, which kept him from kindling in the general flame, checked its progress among his subjects; and as he is accused of open profaneness [u], and was endued with a sharp wit [w], it is likely that he made the romantic chivalry of the crusaders the object of his perpetual raillery. As an instance of his irreligion, we are told, that he once accepted of sixty marks from a Jew, whose eldest son had been converted to Christianity, and who engaged him by that present to assist him in bringing back the youth to Judaism. William employed both menaces and persuasion for that purpose; but finding the convert obstinate in his new faith, he sent for the father, and told him, that as he had not succeeded, it was not just that he should keep the present; but as he had done his utmost, it was but equitable that he should be paid for his pains; and he would therefore retain only thirty marks of the money [x]. At another time, it is said, that he sent for

[u] G. Newbr. p. 358. W. Gemet. p. 292. [w] W. Malm. p. 122.
[x] Eadmer, p. 47.

some

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ſome learned Chriſtian theologians and ſome rabbies, and bade them fairly diſpute the queſtion of their religion in his preſence: He was perfectly indifferent between them; had his ears open to reaſon and conviction; and would embrace that doctrine, which upon compariſon ſhould be found ſupported by the moſt ſolid arguments [y]. If this ſtory be true, it is probable that he meant only to amuſe himſelf by turning both into ridicule: But we muſt be cautious of admitting every thing related by the monkiſh hiſtorians to the diſadvantage of this prince: He had the misfortune to be engaged in quarrels with the eccleſiaſtics, particularly with Anſelm, commonly called St. Anſelm, archbiſhop of Canterbury; and it is no wonder his memory ſhould be blackened by the hiſtorians of that order.

Quarrel with Anſelm, the primate.

AFTER the death of Lanfranc, the king, for ſeveral years, retained in his own hands the revenues of Canterbury, as he did thoſe of many other vacant biſhoprics; but falling into a dangerous illneſs, he was ſeized with remorſe, and the clergy repreſented to him, that he was in danger of eternal perdition, if before his death he did not make atonement for thoſe multiplied impieties and ſacrileges, of which he had been guilty [z]. He reſolved therefore to ſupply inſtantly the vacancy of Canterbury; and for that purpoſe he ſent for Anſelm, a Piedmonteſe by birth, abbot of Bec in Normandy, who was much celebrated for his learning and piety. The abbot earneſtly refuſed the dignity, fell on his knees, wept, and entreated the king to change his purpoſe [a]; and when he found the prince obſtinate in forcing the paſtoral ſtaff upon him, he kept his fiſt ſo faſt clenched, that it required the utmoſt violence of the byſtanders to open it, and force him to receive that enſign of ſpiritual dignity [b]. William ſoon after recovered; and his paſſions regaining

[y] W. Malm. p. 123. [z] Eadmer, p. 16. Chron. Sax. p. 198.
[a] Eadmer, p. 17. Diceto, p. 494. [b] Eadmer, p. 18.

their

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their wonted force and vigour, he returned to his former violence and rapine. He detained in prison several persons whom he had ordered to be freed during the time of his penitence; he still preyed upon the ecclesiastical benefices; the sale of spiritual dignities continued as open as ever; and he kept possession of a considerable part of the revenues belonging to the see of Canterbury [c]. But he found in Anselm that persevering opposition, which he had reason to expect from the ostentatious humility, which that prelate had displayed in refusing his promotion.

The opposition, made by Anselm, was the more dangerous on account of the character of piety, which he soon acquired in England, by his great zeal against all abuses, particularly those in dress and ornament. There was a mode, which, in that age, prevailed throughout Europe, both among men and women, to give an enormous length to their shoes, to draw the toe to a sharp point, and to affix to it the figure of a bird's bill, or some such ornament, which was turned upwards, and which was often sustained by gold or silver chains tied to the knee [d]. The ecclesiastics took exception at this ornament, which, they said, was an attempt to bely the Scripture, where it is affirmed, that no man can add a cubit to his stature; and they declaimed against it with great vehemence, nay assembled some synods, who absolutely condemned it. But, such are the strange contradictions in human nature! though the clergy, at that time, could overturn thrones, and had authority sufficient to send above a million of men on *their* errand to the deserts of Asia, they could never prevail against these long-pointed shoes: On the contrary, that caprice, contrary to all other modes, maintained its ground during several centuries; and if the clergy had not at last desisted from their persecution of

[c] Eadmer, p. 10, 43. Chron. Sax. p. 199. [d] Order. Vital. p. 682. W. Malmes. p. 123. Knyghton, p. 2369.

it,

it, it might ſtill have been the prevailing faſhion in Europe. CHAP. V.

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But Anſelm was more fortunate in decrying the particular mode, which was the object of his averſion, and which probably had not taken ſuch faſt hold of the affections of the people. He preached zealouſly againſt the long hair and curled locks, which were then faſhionable among the courtiers; he refuſed the aſhes on Aſh-Wedneſday to thoſe who were ſo accoutered; and his authority and eloquence had ſuch influence, that the young men univerſally abandoned that ornament, and appeared in the cropt hair, which was recommended to them by the ſermons of the primate. The noted hiſtorian of Anſelm, who was alſo his companion and ſecretary, celebrates highly this effort of his zeal and piety [e].

When William's profaneneſs therefore returned to him with his health, he was ſoon engaged in controverſies with this auſtere prelate. There was at that time a ſchiſm in the church, between Urban and Clement, who both pretended to the papacy [f]; and Anſelm, who, as abbot of Bec, had already acknowledged the former, was determined, without the king's conſent, to introduce his authority into England [g]. William, who, imitating his father's example, had prohibited his ſubjects from recognizing any pope, whom he had not previouſly received, was enraged at this attempt; and ſummoned a ſynod at Rockingham, with an intention of depoſing Anſelm: But the prelate's ſuffragans declared, that, without the papal authority, they knew of no expedient for inflicting that puniſhment on their primate [h]. The king was at laſt engaged by other motives to give the preference to Urban's title; Anſelm received the pall from that pontiff; and matters ſeemed to be accommodated between the king and

[e] Eadmer, p. 23. [f] Hoveden, p. 463. [g] Eadmer, p. 25, M. Paris, p. 13. Diceto, p. 494. Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 16.
[h] Eadmer, p. 30.

the

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1096. the primate [i], when the quarrel broke out afresh from a new cause. William had undertaken an expedition against Wales, and required the archbishop to furnish his quota of soldiers for that service; but Anselm, who regarded the demand as an oppression on the church, and yet durst not refuse compliance, sent them so miserably accoutered, that the king was extremely displeased, and threatened him with a prosecution [k]. Anselm, on the other hand, demanded positively, that all the revenues of his see should be restored to him; appealed to Rome against the king's injustice [l]; and affairs came to such extremities, that the primate, finding it dangerous to remain in the kingdom, desired and obtained the king's permission to retire beyond sea. All his temporalities were seized [m]; but he was received with great respect by Urban, who considered him as a martyr in the cause of religion, and even menaced the king, on account of his proceedings against the primate and the church, with the sentence of excommunication. Anselm assisted at the council of Bari, where, besides fixing the controversy between the Greek and Latin churches, concerning the procession of the Holy Ghost [n], the right of election to church preferments was declared to belong to the clergy alone, and spiritual censures were denounced against all ecclesiastics, who did homage to laymen for their fees or benefices, and against all laymen who exacted it [o]. The right of homage, by the feudal customs, was, that the vassal should throw himself on his knees, should put his joined hands between those of his superior, and should in that posture swear fealty to him [p]. But the council declared it execrable, that pure hands, which could create God, and could offer him up as a sacrifice for the salvation of mankind,

[i] Dicето, p. 495. [k] Eadmer, p. 37, 43. [l] Ibid. p. 40.
[m] M. Paris, p. 13. Parker, p. 178. [n] Eadmer, p. 49. M. Paris, p. 13. Sim. Dun. p. 224. [o] M. Paris, p. 14.
[p] Spelman, Du Cange, in verb. *Hominium*.

should

should be put, after this humiliating manner, between profane hands, which, besides being inured to rapine and bloodshed, were employed day and night in impure purposes and obscène contacts [q]. Such were the reasonings prevalent in that age; reasonings, which, though they cannot be passed over in silence, without omitting the most curious and, perhaps, not the least instructive part of history, can scarcely be delivered with the requisite decency and gravity. CHAP. V. 1096.

THE cession of Normandy and Maine by duke Robert encreased the king's territories; but brought him no great encrease of power, because of the unsettled state of those countries, the mutinous dispositon of the barons, and the vicinity of the French king, who supported them in all their insurrections. Even Helie, lord of la Fleche, a small town in Anjou, was able to give him inquietude; and this great monarch was obliged to make several expeditions abroad, without being able to prevail over so petty a baron, who had acquired the confidence and affections of the inhabitants of Maine. He was, however, so fortunate, as at last to take him prisoner in a rencounter; but having released him, at the intercession of the French king and the count of Anjou, he found the province of Maine still exposed to his intrigues and incursions. Helie, being introduced by the citizens into the town of Mans, besieged the garrison in the citadel: William, who was hunting in the new forest, when he received intelligence of this hostile attempt, was so provoked, that he immediately turned about his horse, and galloped to the sea-shore at Dartmouth; declaring, that he would not stop a moment till he had taken vengeance for the offence. He found the weather so cloudy and tempestuous, that the mariners thought it dangerous 1097. 1099.

[q] W. Heming, p. 467. Flor. Wigorn. p. 649. Sim. Dunelm. p 224. Brompton, p. 994.

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to put to sea: But the king hurried on board, and ordered them to set sail instantly; telling them that they never yet heard of a king that was drowned [r]. By this vigour and celerity, he delivered the citadel of Mans from its present danger; and pursuing Helie into his own territories, he laid siege to Majol, a small castle in those parts: But a wound, which he received before this place, obliged him to raise the siege; and he returned to England.

1099.

1100.

The weakness of the greatest monarchs, during this age, in their military expeditions against their nearest neighbours, appears the more surprising, when we consider the prodigious numbers, which even petty princes, seconding the enthusiastic rage of the people, were able to assemble, and to conduct in dangerous enterprizes to the remote provinces of Asia. William, earl of Poitiers and duke of Guienne, enflamed with the glory, and not discouraged by the misfortunes, which had attended the former adventurers in the crusades, had put himself at the head of an immense multitude, computed by some historians to amount to 60,000 horse, and a much greater number of foot [s], and he proposed to lead them into the Holy Land against the infidels. He wanted money to forward the preparations requisite for this expedition, and he offered to mortgage all his dominions to William, without entertaining any scruple on account of that rapacious and iniquitous hand, to which he resolved to consign them [t]. The king accepted the offer; and had prepared a fleet, and an army, in order to escort the money, and take possession of the rich provinces of Guienne and Poictou; when an accident put an end to his life, and to all his ambitious projects. He was engaged in hunt-

2d August.

[r] W. Malm. p. 124. H. Hunt. p. 378. M. Paris, p. 36. Ypod. Neust. p. 442.

[s] W. Malm. p. 149. The whole is said by Order. Vital. p. 719, to amount to 300,000 men.

[t] W. Malmes. p. 127.

ing,

ing, the sole amusement, and indeed the chief occupation of princes in those rude times, when society was little cultivated, and the arts afforded few objects worthy of attention. Walter Tyrrel, a French gentleman, remarkable for his address in archery, attended him in this recreation, of which the new forest was the scene; and as William had dismounted after a chace, Tyrrel, impatient to show his dexterity, let fly an arrow at a stag, which suddenly started before him. The arrow, glancing from a tree, struck the king in the breast, and instantly slew him [a]; while Tyrrel, without informing any one of the accident, put spurs to his horse, hastened to the sea-shore, embarked for France, and joined the crusade in an expedition to Jerusalem; a penance which he imposed on himself for this involuntary crime. The body of William was found in the forest by the country-people, and was buried without any pomp or ceremony at Winchester. His courtiers were negligent in performing the last duties to a master who was so little beloved; and every one was too much occupied in the interesting object of fixing his successor, to attend the funerals of a dead sovereign.

CHAP. V. 1100. Death

THE memory of this monarch is transmitted to us with little advantage by the churchmen, whom he had offended; and though we may suspect in general, that their account of his vices is somewhat exaggerated, his conduct affords little reason for contradicting the character which they have assigned him, or for attributing to him any very estimable qualities. He seems to have been a violent and tyrannical prince; a perfidious, encroaching, and dangerous neighbour; an unkind and ungenerous relation. He was equally prodigal and rapacious in the management of his treasury; and if he possessed abilities, he lay so much under the government of impetuous passions, and character of William Rufus.

[a] W. Malm. p. 126. H. Hunt. p. 378. M. Paris, p. 37. Petr. Blef. p. 110.

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that he made little use of them in his administration; and he indulged, without reserve, that domineering policy, which suited his temper, and which, if supported, as it was in him, with courage and vigour, proves often more successful in disorderly times, than the deepest foresight and most refined artifice.

The monuments which remained of this prince in England are the Tower, Westminster-hall, and London-bridge, which he built. The most laudable foreign enterprize which he undertook, was the sending of Edgar Atheling, three years before his death, into Scotland with a small army, to restore prince Edgar the true heir of that kingdom, son of Malcolm, and of Margaret, sister of Edgar Atheling; and the enterprize proved successful. It was remarked in that age, that Richard, an elder brother of William's, perished by an accident in the new forest; Richard, his nephew, natural son of duke Robert, lost his life in the same place, after the same manner: And all men, upon the king's fate, exclaimed, that, as the Conqueror had been guilty of extreme violence, in expelling all the inhabitants of that large district, to make room for his game, the just vengeance of heaven was signalized, in the same place, by the slaughter of his posterity. William was killed in the thirteenth year of his reign, and about the fortieth of his age. As he was never married, he left no legitimate issue.

In the eleventh year of this reign, Magnus king of Norway, made a descent on the isle of Anglesea; but was repulsed by Hugh, earl of Shrewsbury. This is the last attempt made by the northern nations upon England. That restless people seem about this time to have learned the use of tillage, which thenceforth kept them at home, and freed the other nations of Europe from the devastations spread over them by those pyratical invaders. This proved one great cause of the subsequent settlement and improvement of the southern nations.

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HENRY I.

The Cruſades——Acceſſion of Henry——Marriage of the king——Invaſion by duke Robert——Accommodation with Robert——Attack of Normandy——Conqueſt of Normandy——Continuation of the quarrel with Anſelm, the primate——Compromiſe with him——Wars abroad——Death of prince William——King's ſecond marriage——Death——and character of Henry.

The cruſades.

AFTER the adventurers in the holy war were aſſembled on the banks of the Boſphorus, oppoſite to Conſtantinople, they proceeded on their enterprize; but immediately experienced thoſe difficulties, which their zeal had hitherto concealed from them, and for which, even if they had foreſeen them, it would have been almoſt impoſſible to provide a remedy. The Greek emperor, Alexis Comnenus, who had applied to the weſtern Chriſtians for ſuccour againſt the Turks, entertained hopes, and thoſe but feeble ones, of obtaining ſuch a moderate ſupply, as, acting under his command, might enable him to repulſe the enemy: But he was extremely aſtoniſhed to ſee his dominions overwhelmed, on a ſudden, by ſuch an inundation of licentious barbarians, who, though they pretended friendſhip, deſpiſed his ſubjects as unwarlike, and deteſted them as heretical. By all the arts of policy, in which he excelled, he endeavoured to divert the torrent; but while he employed profeſſions, careſſes, civilities, and ſeeming ſervices towards the leaders of the cruſade, he ſecretly regarded thoſe imperious

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allies as more dangerous than the open enemies, by whom his empire had been formerly invaded. Having effectuated that difficult point of diſembarking them ſafely in Aſia, he entered into a private correſpondence with Soliman, emperor of the Turks; and practiſed every inſidious art, which his genius, his power, or his ſituation enabled him to employ, for diſappointing the enterprize, and diſcouraging the Latins from making thenceforward any ſuch prodigious migrations. His dangerous policy was ſeconded by the diſorders, inſeparable from ſo vaſt a multitude, who were not united under one head, and were conducted by leaders of the moſt independant, intractable ſpirit, unacquainted with military diſcipline, and determined enemies to civil authority and ſubmiſſion. The ſcarcity of proviſions, the exceſſes of fatigue, the influence of unknown climates, joined to the want of concert in their operations, and to the ſword of a warlike enemy, deſtroyed the adventurers by thouſands, and would have abated the ardour of men, impelled to war by leſs powerful motives. Their zeal, however, their bravery, and their irreſiſtible force ſtill carried them forward, and continually advanced them to the great end of their enterprize. After an obſtinate ſiege, they took Nice, the ſeat of the Turkiſh empire; they defeated Soliman in two great battles; they made themſelves maſters of Antioch; and entirely broke the force of the Turks, who had ſo long retained thoſe countries in ſubjection. The ſoldan of Egypt, whoſe alliance they had hitherto courted, recovered, on the fall of the Turkiſh power, his former authority in Jeruſalem: He informed them by his ambaſſadors, that, if they came diſarmed to that city, they might now perform their religious vows, and that all Chriſtian pilgrims, who ſhould thenceforth viſit the holy ſepulchre, might expect the ſame good treatment, which they had ever received from his predeceſſors. The offer

was

was rejected; the ſoldan was required to yield up the city to the Chriſtians; and on his refuſal, the champions of the croſs advanced to the ſiege of Jeruſalem, which they regarded as the conſummation of their labours. By the detachments which they had made, and the diſaſters which they had undergone, they were diminiſhed to the number of twenty thouſand foot and fifteen hundred horſe; but theſe were ſtill formidable, from their valour, their experience, and the obedience, which, from the experience of paſt calamities, they had learned to pay to their leaders. After a ſiege of five weeks, they took Jeruſalem by aſſault; and, impelled by a mixture of military and religious rage, they put the numerous garriſon and inhabitants to the ſword without diſtinction. Neither arms defended the valiant, nor ſubmiſſion the timorous: No age or ſex was ſpared: Infants on the breaſt were pierced by the ſame blow with their mothers, who implored for mercy: Even a multitude, to the number of ten thouſand perſons, who had ſurrendered themſelves priſoners, and were promiſed quarter, were butchered in cool blood by thoſe ferocious conquerors [w]. The ſtreets of Jeruſalem were covered with dead bodies [x]; and the triumphant warriors, after every enemy was ſubdued and ſlaughtered, immediately turned themſelves, with the ſentiments of humiliation and contrition, towards the holy ſepulchre. They threw aſide their arms, ſtill ſtreaming with blood: They advanced with reclined bodies, and naked feet and heads to that ſacred monument: They ſung anthems to their Saviour, who had there purchaſed their ſalvation by his death and agony: And their devotion, enlivened by the preſence of the place where he had ſuffered, ſo overcame their fury, that they diſſolved in tears, and bore the appearance of every ſoft and tender ſentiment. So inconſiſtent is hu-

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[w] Vertot, vol. i. p. 57. p. 756. Diceto, p. 498.

[x] M. Paris, p. 34. Order. Vital.

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man nature with itſelf! And ſo eaſily does the moſt effeminate ſuperſtition ally, both with the moſt heroic courage, and with the fierceſt barbarity!

This great event happened on the fifth of July in the laſt year of the eleventh century. The Chriſtian princes and nobles, after chuſing Godfrey of Boüillion king of Jeruſalem, began to ſettle themſelves in their new conqueſts; while ſome of them returned to Europe, in order to enjoy at home that glory, which their valour had acquired them in this popular and meritorious enterprize. Among theſe, was Robert, duke of Normandy, who, as he had relinquiſhed the greateſt dominions of any prince, that attended the cruſade, had all along diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the moſt intrepid courage, as well as by that affable diſpoſition and unbounded generoſity, which gain the hearts of ſoldiers, and qualify a prince to ſhine in a military life. In paſſing through Italy, he became acquainted with Sibylla, daughter of the count of Converſana, a young lady of great beauty and merit, whom he eſpouſed: Indulging himſelf in this new paſſion, as well as fond of enjoying eaſe and pleaſure, after the fatigues of ſo many rough campaigns, he lingered a twelvemonth in that delicious climate; and though his friends in the north looked every moment for his arrival, none of them knew when they could with certainty expect it. By this delay, he loſt the kingdom of England, which the great fame he had acquired during the cruſades, as well as his undoubted title, both by birth, and by the preceding agreement with his deceaſed brother, would, had he been preſent, have infallibly ſecured to him.

Acceſſion of Henry.

Prince Henry was hunting with Ruſus in the new foreſt, when intelligence of that monarch's death was brought him; and being ſenſible of the advantage, attending the conjuncture, he hurried to Wincheſter, in order to ſecure the royal treaſure, which he knew to be a neceſſary

fary implement for facilitating his defigns on the crown. He had fcarcely reached the place when William de Breteuil, keeper of the treafure, arrived, and oppofed himfelf to Henry's pretenfions. This nobleman, who had been engaged in the fame party of hunting, had no fooner heard of his maſter's death, than he haſtened to take care of his charge; and he told the prince, that this treaſure, as well as the crown, belonged to his elder brother, who was now his fovereign; and that he himſelf, for his part, was determined, in ſpite of all other pretenſions, to maintain his allegiance to him. But Henry, drawing his ſword, threatened him with inſtant death, if he dared to diſobey him; and as others of the late king's retinue, who came every moment to Wincheſter, joined the prince's party, Breteuil was obliged to withdraw his oppoſition, and to acquieſce in this violence [y].

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HENRY, without loſing a moment, haſtened with the money to London; and having aſſembled ſome noblemen and prelates, whom his addreſs, or abilities, or preſents, gained to his ſide, he was ſuddenly elected, or rather ſaluted king; and immediately proceeded to the exerciſe of royal authority. In leſs than three days after his brother's death, the ceremonial of his coronation was performed by Maurice, biſhop of London, who was perſuaded to officiate on that occaſion [z]; and thus, by his courage and celerity, he intruded himſelf into the vacant throne. No one had ſufficient ſpirit or ſenſe of duty to appear in defence of the abſent prince: All men were ſeduced or intimidated: Preſent poſſeſſion ſupplied the apparent deficiencies in Henry's title, which was indeed founded on plain uſurpation: And the barons, as well as the people, acquieſced in a claim, which, though it could neither be juſtified nor comprehended, could now,

y Order. Vital. p. 782. z Chron. Sax. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 783.

they

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they found, be oppoſed through the perils alone of civil war and rebellion.

1100.

But as Henry eaſily foreſaw, that a crown, uſurped againſt all rules of juſtice, would ſit unſteady on his head, he reſolved, by fair profeſſions at leaſt, to gain the affections of all his ſubjects. Beſides taking the uſual coronation-oath to maintain the laws and execute juſtice, he paſſed a charter, which was calculated to remedy many of the grievous oppreſſions, which had been complained of during the reigns of his father and brother [a]. He there promiſed, that, at the death of any biſhop or abbot, he never would ſeize the revenues of the ſee or abbey during the vacancy, but would leave the whole to be reaped by the ſucceſſor; and that he would never let to farm any eccleſiaſtical benefice, nor diſpoſe of it for money. After this conceſſion to the church, whoſe favour was of ſo great conſequence, he proceeded to enumerate the civil grievances, which he purpoſed to redreſs. He promiſed, that, upon the death of any earl, baron, or military tenant, his heir ſhould be admitted to the poſſeſſion of his eſtate, on paying a juſt and lawful relief; without being expoſed to ſuch violent exactions as had been uſual during the late reigns: He remitted the wardſhip of minors, and allowed guardians to be appointed, who ſhould be anſwerable for the truſt: He promiſed not to diſpoſe of any heireſs in marriage, but by the advice of all the barons; and if any baron intended to give his daughter, ſiſter, niece, or kinſwoman, in marriage, it ſhould only be neceſſary for him to conſult the king, who promiſed to take no money for his conſent, nor ever to refuſe permiſſion, unleſs the perſon, to whom it was propoſed to marry her, ſhould happen to be his enemy: He granted his barons and military te-

[a] Chron. Sax. p. 208. Sim. Dunelm. p. 225.

nants

nants the power of bequeathing by will their money or perſonal eſtates; and if they neglected to make a will, he promiſed, that their heirs ſhould ſucceed to them: He renounced the right of impoſing moneyage, and of levying taxes at pleaſure on the farms, which the barons retained in their own hands [b]: He made ſome general profeſſions of moderating fines; he offered a pardon for all offences; and he remitted all debts due to the crown: He required, that the vaſſals of the barons ſhould enjoy the ſame privileges, which he granted to his own barons; and he promiſed a general confirmation and obſervance of the laws of king Edward. This is the ſubſtance of the chief articles contained in that famous charter [c].

To give greater authenticity to theſe conceſſions, Henry lodged a copy of his charter in ſome abbey of each county; as if deſirous, that it ſhould be expoſed to the view of all his ſubjects, and remain a perpetual rule for the limitation and direction of his government: Yet it is certain, that, after the preſent purpoſe was ſerved, he never once thought, during his reign, of obſerving one ſingle article of it; and the whole fell ſo much into neglect and oblivion, that, in the following century, when the barons, who had heard an obſcure tradition of it, deſired to make it the model of the great charter, which they exacted from king John, they could with difficulty find a copy of it in the kingdom. But as to the grievances here propoſed to be redreſſed, they were ſtill continued in their full extent; and the royal authority, in all thoſe particulars, lay under no manner of reſtriction. Reliefs of heirs, ſo capital an article, were never effectually fixed till the time of Magna Charta [d]; and it is evident, that the general promiſe here given,

[b] See Appendix II. [c] Matth. Paris, p. 38. Hoveden, p. 468. Brompton, p. 1021. Hagulſtad, p. 310. [d] Glanv. lib. 2. cap. 36. What is called a relief in the Conqueror's laws, preſerved by Ingulf, ſeems to have been the herriot; ſince reliefs, as well as the other burdens of the feudal law

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given, of accepting a juſt and lawful relief, ought to have been reduced to more preciſion, in order to give ſecurity to the ſubject. The oppreſſion of wardſhip and marriage was perpetuated even till the age of Charles II.: And it appears from Glanville [e], the famous juſticiary of Henry II. that, in his time, where any man died inteſtate, an accident which muſt have been very frequent, when the art of writing was ſo little known, the king, or the lord of the fief, pretended to ſeize all the moveables, and to exclude every heir, even the children of the deceaſed: A ſure mark of a tyrannical and arbitrary government.

THE Normans indeed, ſettled in England, were, during this age, ſo violent and licentious a people, that they may be pronounced incapable of any true or regular liberty; which requires ſuch improvement in knowledge and morals, as can only be the reſult of reflection and experience, and muſt grow to perfection during ſeveral ages of ſettled and eſtabliſhed government. A people, ſo inſenſible to the rights of their ſovereign, as to disjoint, without neceſſity, the hereditary ſucceſſion, and permit a younger brother to intrude himſelf into the place of the elder, whom they eſteemed, and who was guilty of no crime but being abſent, could not expect, that that prince would pay any greater regard to their privileges, or allow his engagements to fetter his power, and debar him from any conſiderable intereſt or convenience. They had indeed arms in their hands, which prevented the eſtabliſhment of a total deſpotiſm, and left their poſterity ſufficient power, whenever they ſhould attain a ſufficient degree of reaſon, to aſſume true liberty: But their turbulent diſpoſition frequently prompted them to

law were unknown in the age of the Confeſſor, whoſe laws theſe originally were.

[e] Lib. 7. cap. 16. This practice was contrary to the laws of king Edward, ratified by the Conqueror, as we learn from Ingulf, p. 91. But laws had at that time very little influence: Power and violence governed every thing.

make

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shake such use of their arms, that they were more fitted to obstruct the execution of justice, than to stop the career of violence and oppression. The prince, finding that greater opposition was often made to him when he enforced the laws, than when he violated them, was apt to render his own will and pleasure the sole rule of government; and on every emergence to consider more the power of the persons whom he might offend, than the rights of those whom he might injure. The very form of this charter of Henry proves, that the Norman barons (for they, rather than the people of England, are chiefly concerned in it) were totally ignorant of the nature of limited monarchy, and were ill qualified to conduct, in conjunction with their sovereign, the machine of government. It is an act of his sole power, is the result of his free grace, contains some articles which bind others as well as himself, and is therefore unfit to be the deed of any one who possesses not the whole legislative power, and who may not at pleasure revoke all his concessions.

HENRY, farther to encrease his popularity, degraded and committed to prison Ralph Flambard, bishop of Durham, who had been the chief instrument of oppression under his brother[f]: But this act was followed by another, which was a direct violation of his own charter, and was a bad prognostic of his sincere intentions to observe it: He kept the see of Durham vacant for five years, and during that time retained possession of all its revenues. Sensible of the great authority, which Anselm had acquired by his character of piety, and by the persecutions which he had undergone from William, he sent repeated messages to him at Lyons, where he resided, and invited him to return and take possession of his dignities[g]. On the arrival of the prelate, he proposed to him the re-

[f] Chron. Sax. p. 208. W. Malm. p. 156. Matth. Paris, p. 39. Alur. Beverl. p. 144.

[g] Chron. Sax. p. 208. Order. Vital. p. 783. Matth. Paris, p. 39. T. Rudborne, p. 273.

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1100. newal of that homage which he had done his brother, and which had never been refuſed by any Engliſh biſhop: But Anſelm had acquired other ſentiments by his journey to Rome, and gave the king an abſolute refuſal. He objected the decrees of the council of Bari, at which he himſelf had aſſiſted; and he declared that, ſo far from doing homage for his ſpiritual dignity, he would not ſo much as communicate with any eccleſiaſtic, who paid that ſubmiſſion, or who accepted of inveſtitures from laymen. Henry, who propoſed, in his preſent delicate ſituation, to reap great advantages from the authority and popularity of Anſelm, durſt not inſiſt on his demand [g]: He only deſired that the controverſy might be ſuſpended; and that meſſengers might be ſent to Rome, in order to accommodate matters with the pope, and obtain his confirmation of the laws and cuſtoms of England.

Marriage of the king.

THERE immediately occurred an important affair, in which the king was obliged to have recourſe to the authority of Anſelm. Matilda, daughter of Malcolm III. king of Scotland, and niece to Edgar Atheling, had, on her father's death, and the ſubſequent revolutions in the Scottiſh government, been brought to England, and educated under her aunt, Chriſtina, in the nunnery of Rumſey. This princeſs Henry propoſed to marry; but as ſhe had worn the veil, though never taken the vows, doubts might ariſe concerning the lawfulneſs of the act; and it behoved him to be very careful not to ſhock, in any particular, the religious prejudices of his ſubjects. The affair was examined by Anſelm in a council of the prelates and nobles, which was ſummoned at Lambeth: Matilda there proved, that ſhe had put on the veil, not with a view of entering into a religious life, but merely in conſequence of a cuſtom, familiar to the Engliſh ladies, who

[g] W. Malm. p. 225.

protected

protected their chastity from the brutal violence of the Normans, by taking shelter under that habit [h], which, amidst the horrible licentiousness of the times, was yet generally revered. The council, sensible that even a princess had otherwise no security for her honour, admitted this reason as valid: They pronounced, that Matilda was still free to marry [i]; and her espousals with Henry were celebrated by Anselm with great pomp and solemnity [k]. No act of the king's reign rendered him equally popular with his English subjects, and tended more to establish him on the throne. Though Matilda, during the life of her uncle and brothers, was not heir of the Saxon line, she was become very dear to the English on account of her connexions with it: And that people, who, before the conquest, had fallen into a kind of indifference towards their ancient royal family, had felt so severely the tyranny of the Normans, that they reflected with extreme regret on their former liberty, and hoped for a more equal and mild administration, when the blood of their native princes should be united with that of their new sovereigns [l].

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BUT the policy and prudence of Henry, which, if time had been allowed for these virtues to produce their full effect, would have secured him possession of the crown, ran great hazard of being frustrated by the sudden appearance of Robert, who returned to Normandy about a month after the death of his brother William. He took possession, without opposition, of that dutchy; and immediately made preparations for recovering England, of which, during his absence, he had, by Henry's intrigues, been so unjustly defrauded. The great fame, which he had acquired in the East, forwarded his pretensions; and the Norman barons, sensible of the conse-

Invasion by duke Robert. 1101.

[h] Eadmer, p. 57. [i] Ibid. [k] Hoveden, p. 468.
[l] M. Paris, p. 42.

quences,

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1101.

quences, expreſſed the ſame diſcontent at the ſeparation of the dutchy and kingdom, which had appeared on the acceſſion of William. Robert de Beleſme, earl of Shrewſbury and Arundel, William de la Warenne, earl of Surrey, Arnulf de Montgomery, Walter Giffard, Robert de Pontefract, Robert de Mallet, Yvo de Grentmeſnil, and many others of the principal nobility [m], invited Robert to make up an attempt on England, and promiſed, on his landing, to join him with all their forces. Even the ſeamen were affected with the general popularity of his name, and they carried over to him the greateſt part of a fleet, which had been equipped to oppoſe his paſſage. Henry, in this extremity, began to be apprehenſive for his life, as well as for his crown; and had recourſe to the ſuperſtition of the people, in order to oppoſe their ſentiment of juſtice. He paid diligent court to Anſelm, whoſe ſanctity and wiſdom he pretended to revere. He conſulted him in all difficult emergencies; ſeemed to be governed by him in every meaſure; promiſed a ſtrict regard to eccleſiaſtical privileges; profeſſed a great attachment to Rome, and a reſolution of perſevering in an implicit obedience to the decrees of councils, and to the will of the ſovereign pontiff. By theſe careſſes and declarations, he entirely gained the confidence of the primate, whoſe influence over the people, and authority with the barons, were of the utmoſt ſervice to him, in his preſent ſituation. Anſelm ſcrupled not to aſſure the nobles of the king's ſincerity in thoſe profeſſions which he made, of avoiding the tyrannical and oppreſſive government of his father and brother: He even rode through the ranks of the army, recommended to the ſoldiers the defence of their prince, repreſented the duty of keeping their oaths of allegiance, and prognoſticated to them the greateſt happi-

[m] Order. Vital. p. 785.

neſs

neſs from the government of ſo wiſe and juſt a ſovereign. By this expedient, joined to the influence of the earls of Warwick and Mellent, of Roger Bigod, Richard de Redvers, and Robert Fitz-Hamon, powerful barons, who ſtill adhered to the preſent government, the army was retained in the king's intereſts, and marched, with ſeeming union and firmneſs, to oppoſe Robert, who had landed with his forces at Portſmouth. CHAP. VI. 1101.

Accommodation with Robert.

THE two armies lay in ſight of each other for ſome days without coming to action; and both princes, being apprehenſive of the event, which would probably be deciſive, hearkened the more willingly to the counſels of Anſelm and the other great men, who mediated an accommodation between them. After employing ſome negotiation, it was agreed, that Robert ſhould reſign his pretenſions to England, and receive in lieu of them an annual penſion of 3000 marks; that, if either of the princes died without iſſue, the other ſhould ſucceed to his dominions; that the adherents of each ſhould be pardoned, and reſtored to all their poſſeſſions either in Normandy or England; and that neither Robert nor Henry ſhould thenceforth encourage, receive, or protect the enemies of the other [n].

1102.

THIS treaty, though calculated ſo much for Henry's advantage, he was the firſt to violate. He reſtored indeed the eſtates of all Robert's adherents; but was ſecretly determined, that noblemen ſo powerful and ſo ill affected, who had both inclination and ability to diſturb his government, ſhould not long remain unmoleſted in their preſent opulence and grandeur. He began with the earl of Shrewſbury, who was watched for ſome time by ſpies, and then indicted on a charge, conſiſting of forty-five articles. This turbulent nobleman, knowing his own

[n] Chron. Sax. p. 209. W. Malmeſ. p. 156.

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guilt, as well as the prejudices of his judges, and the power of his profecutor, had recourfe to arms for defence: But being foon fuppreffed by the activity and addrefs of Henry, he was baniſhed the kingdom, and his great eſtate was confiſcated. His ruin involved that of his two brothers, Arnulf de Montgomery, and Roger earl of Lancaſter. Soon after followed the profecution and condemnation of Robert de Pontefract and Robert de Mallet, who had diſtinguiſhed themſelves among Robert's adherents. William de Warenne was the next victim: Even William earl of Cornwal, ſon of the earl of Mortaigne, the king's uncle, having given matter of ſuſpicion againſt him, loſt all the vaſt acquiſitions of his family in England. Though the uſual violence and tyranny of the Norman barons afforded a plauſible pretence for thoſe profecutions, and it is probable that none of the ſentences, pronounced againſt theſe noblemen, was wholly iniquitous; men eaſily ſaw or conjectured, that the chief part of their guilt was not the injuſtice or illegality of their conduct. Robert, enraged at the fate of his friends, imprudently ventured to come into England; and he remonſtrated with his brother, in ſevere terms, againſt this breach of treaty: But met with ſo bad a reception, that he began to apprehend danger to his own liberty, and was glad to purchaſe an eſcape, by reſigning his penſion.

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1103.

THE indiſcretion of Robert ſoon expoſed him to more fatal injuries. This prince, whoſe bravery and candor procured him reſpect, while at a diſtance, had no ſooner attained the poſſeſſion of power, and enjoyment of peace, than all the vigour of his mind relaxed; and he fell into contempt among thoſe who approached his perſon, or were ſubjected to his authority. Alternately abandoned to diſſolute pleaſures and to womaniſh ſuperſtition, he was ſo remiſs, both in the care of his treaſure and the exerciſe of his government, that his ſervants pillaged his money with

impunity, ſtole from him his very clothes, and proceeded thence to practiſe every ſpecies of extortion on his defenceleſs ſubjects. The barons, whom a ſevere adminiſtration alone could have reſtrained, gave reins to their unbounded rapine upon their vaſſals, and inveterate animoſities againſt each other; and all Normandy, during the reign of this benign prince, was become a ſcene of violence and depredation. The Normans at laſt, obſerving the regular government, which Henry, notwithſtanding his uſurped title, had been able to eſtabliſh in England, applied to him, that he might uſe his authority for the ſuppreſſion of theſe diſorders; and they thereby afforded him a pretence for interpoſing in the affairs of Normandy. Inſtead of employing his mediation, to render his brother's government reſpectable, or to redreſs the grievances of the Normans; he was only attentive to ſupport his own partizans, and to encreaſe their number by every art of bribery, intrigue, and inſinuation. Having found, in a viſit, which he made to that dutchy, that the nobility were more diſpoſed to pay ſubmiſſion to him than to their legal ſovereign; he collected, by arbitrary extortions on England, a great army and treaſure, and returned next year to Normandy, in a ſituation to obtain, either by violence or corruption, the dominion of that province. He took Bayeux by ſtorm after an obſtinate ſiege: He made himſelf maſter of Caen by the voluntary ſubmiſſion of the inhabitants: But being repulſed at Falaiſe, and obliged, by the winter ſeaſon, to raiſe the ſiege, he returned into England; after giving aſſurances to his adherents, that he would perſevere in ſupporting and protecting them.

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1103. Attack of Normandy.

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NEXT year, he opened the campaign with the ſiege of Tenchebray; and it became evident, from his preparations and progreſs, that he intended to uſurp the entire

1106. Conqueſt of Normandy.

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1106. poſſeſſion of Normandy. Robert was at laſt rouzed from his lethargy; and being ſupported by the earl of Mortaigne and Robert de Belleſme, the king's inveterate enemies, he raiſed a conſiderable army, and approached his brother's camp, with a view of finiſhing, in one deciſive battle, the quarrel between them. He was now entered on that ſcene of action, in which alone he was qualified to excel; and he ſo animated his troops by his example, that they threw the Engliſh into confuſion, and had nearly obtained the victory [o]; when the flight of Belleſme ſpread a panic among the Normans, and occaſioned their total defeat. Henry, beſides doing great execution on the enemy, made near ten thouſand priſoners; among whom was duke Robert himſelf, and all the moſt conſiderable barons, who adhered to his intereſts [p]. This victory was followed by the final reduction of Normandy: Roüen immediately ſubmitted to the conqueror: Falaiſe, after ſome negotiation, opened its gates; and by this acquiſition, beſides rendering himſelf maſter of an important fortreſs, he got into his hands prince William, the only ſon of Robert: He aſſembled the ſtates of Normandy; and having received the homage of all the vaſſals of the dutchy, having ſettled the government, revoked his brother's donations, and diſmantled the caſtles, lately built, he returned into England, and carried along with him the duke as priſoner. That unfortunate prince was detained in cuſtody during the remainder of his life, which was no leſs than twenty-eight years, and he died in the caſtle of Cardiff in Glamorganſhire; happy if, without loſing his liberty, he could have relinquiſhed that power, which he was not qualified either to hold or exerciſe. Prince William was committed to the care of Helie de St. Saen, who had married Robert's natural daughter, and who,

[o] H. Hunt. p. 379. M. Paris, p. 43. Brompton, p. 1002.
[p] Eadmer, p. 90. Chron. Sax. p. 214. Order. Vital. p. 821.

being a man of probity and honour, beyond what was usual in those ages, executed the trust with great affection and fidelity. Edgar Atheling, who had followed Robert in the expedition to Jerusalem, and who had lived with him ever since in Normandy, was another illustrious prisoner, taken in the battle of Tenchebray [q]. Henry gave him his liberty, and settled a small pension on him, with which he retired; and he lived to a good old age in England, totally neglected and forgotten. This prince was distinguished by personal bravery: But nothing can be a stronger proof of his mean talents in every other respect, than that, notwithstanding he possessed the affections of the English, and enjoyed the only legal title to the throne, he was allowed, during the reigns of so many violent and jealous usurpers, to live unmolested, and go to his grave in peace.

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A LITTLE after Henry had completed the conquest of Normandy, and settled the government of that province, he finished a controversy, which had been long depending between him and the pope, with regard to the investitures in ecclesiastical benefices; and though he was here obliged to relinquish some of the ancient rights of the crown, he extricated himself from the difficulty on easier terms than most princes, who, in that age, were so unhappy as to be engaged in disputes with the apostolic see. The king's situation, in the beginning of his reign, obliged him to pay great court to Anselm: The advantages, which he had reaped from the zealous friendship of that prelate, had made him sensible how prone the minds of his people were to superstition, and what an ascendant the ecclesiastics had been able to assume over them. He had seen, on the accession of his brother Rufus, that, though the rights of primogeniture were then violated,

1107. Continuation of the quarrel with Anselm the primate.

[q] Chron. Sax. p. 214. Ann. Waverl. p. 144.

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and the inclinations of almoſt all the barons thwarted, yet the authority of Lanfranc, the primate, had prevailed over all other conſiderations: His own caſe, which was ſtill more unfavourable, afforded an inſtance, in which the clergy had more evidently ſhown their influence and authority. Theſe recent examples, while they made him cautious not to offend that powerful body, convinced him, at the ſame time, that it was extremely his intereſt to retain the former prerogative of the crown in filling offices of ſuch vaſt importance, and to check the eccleſiaſtics in that independance to which they viſibly aſpired. The choice, which his brother, in a fit of penitence, had made of Anſelm, was ſo far unfortunate to the king's pretenſions, that this prelate was celebrated for his piety and zeal and auſterity of manners; and though his monkiſh devotion and narrow principles prognoſticated no great knowledge of the world or depth of policy, he was, on that very account, a more dangerous inſtrument in the hands of politicians, and retained a greater aſcendant over the bigotted populace. The prudence and temper of the king appear in nothing more conſpicuous than in the management of this delicate affair; where he was always ſenſible that it had become neceſſary for him to riſque his whole crown, in order to preſerve the moſt invaluable jewel of it [p].

Anselm had no ſooner returned from baniſhment, than his refuſal to do homage to the king raiſed a diſpute, which Henry evaded at that critical juncture, by promiſing to ſend a meſſenger, in order to compound the matter with Paſcal II. who then filled the papal throne. The meſſenger, as was probably foreſeen, returned with an abſolute refuſal of the king's demands [q]; and that fortified by many reaſons, which were well qualified to operate on the underſtandings of men in thoſe ages.

[p] Eadmer, p. 56. [q] W. Malm. p. 225.

Paſcal

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Paſcal quoted the ſcriptures to prove that Chriſt was the door; and he thence inferred, that all eccleſiaſtics muſt enter into the church through Chriſt alone, not through the civil magiſtrate, or any profane laymen [r]. "It is "monſtrous," added the pontiff, "that a ſon ſhould "pretend to beget his father, or a man to create his "God: Prieſts are called Gods in ſcripture, as being "the vicars of God: And will you, by your abominable "pretenſions to grant them their inveſtiture, aſſume the "right of creating them [s]?"

But how convincing ſoever theſe arguments, they could not perſuade Henry to reſign ſo important a prerogative; and perhaps, as he was poſſeſſed of great reflection and learning, he thought, that the abſurdity of a man's creating his God, even allowing prieſts to be gods, was not urged with the beſt grace by the Roman pontiff. But as he deſired ſtill to avoid, at leaſt to delay, the coming to any dangerous extremity with the church, he perſuaded Anſelm, that he ſhould be able, by farther negociation, to attain ſome compoſition with Paſcal; and for that purpoſe, he diſpatched three biſhops to Rome, while Anſelm ſent two meſſengers of his own, to be more fully aſſured of the pope's intentions [t]. Paſcal wrote back letters equally poſitive and arrogant both to the king and primate; urging to the former, that, by aſſuming the right of inveſtitures, he committed a kind of ſpiritual adultery with the church, who was the ſpouſe of Chriſt, and who muſt not admit of ſuch a commerce with any other perſon [u]; and inſiſting with the latter,

[r] Eadmer, p. 60. This topic is farther enforced in p. 73, 74. See alſo W. Malm. p. 163.

[s] Eadmer, p. 61. I much ſuſpect, that this text of ſcripture is a forgery of his holineſs: For I have not been able to find it. Yet it paſſed current in thoſe ages, and was often quoted by the clergy as the foundation of their power. See Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 169.

[t] Eadmer, p. 62. W. Malm. p. 225. [u] Eadmer, p. 63.

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that the pretenſions of kings to confer benefices was the ſource of all ſimony; a topic which had but too much foundation in thoſe ages [w].

HENRY had now no other expedient than to ſuppreſs the letter addreſſed to himſelf, and to perſuade the three biſhops to prevaricate, and aſſert, upon their epiſcopal faith, that Paſcal had aſſured them in private of his good intentions towards Henry, and of his reſolution not to reſent any future exertion of his prerogative in granting inveſtitures; though he himſelf ſcrupled to give this aſſurance under his hand, leſt other princes ſhould copy the example and aſſume a like privilege [x]. Anſelm's two meſſengers, who were monks, affirmed to him, that it was impoſſible this ſtory could have any foundation: But their word was not deemed equal to that of three biſhops; and the king, as if he had finally gained his cauſe, proceeded to fill the ſees of Hereford and Saliſbury, and to inveſt the new biſhops in the uſual manner [y]. But Anſelm, who, as he had good reaſon, gave no credit to the aſſeveration of the king's meſſengers, refuſed not only to conſecrate them, but even to communicate with them; and the biſhops themſelves, finding how odious they were become, returned to Henry the enſigns of their dignity. The quarrel every day encreaſed between the king and the primate: The former, notwithſtanding the prudence and moderation of his temper, threw out menaces againſt ſuch as ſhould pretend to oppoſe him in exerting the ancient prerogatives of his crown: And Anſelm, ſenſible of his own dangerous ſituation, deſired leave to make a journey to Rome, in order to lay the caſe before the ſovereign pontiff. Henry, well pleaſed to rid himſelf without violence of ſo inflexible an antagoniſt,

[w] Eadmer, p. 64, 66. [x] Eadmer, p. 65. W. Malm. p. 225.
[y] Eadmer, p. 66. W. Malm. p. 225. Hoveden, p. 469. Sim. Dunelm. p. 228.

readily

readily granted him permiſſion. The prelate was attended to the ſea-coaſt by infinite multitudes, not only monks and clergymen, but people of all ranks, who ſcrupled not in this manner to declare for their primate againſt their ſovereign, and who regarded his departure as the final abolition of religion and true piety in the kingdom [z]. The king, however, ſeized all the revenues of his ſee; and ſent William de Warelwaſt to negociate with Paſcal, and to find ſome means of accommodation in this delicate affair. CHAP. VI. 1107.

THE Engliſh miniſter told Paſcal, that his maſter would rather loſe his crown than part with the right of granting inveſtitures. "And I," replied Paſcal, "would "rather loſe my head than allow him to retain it [a]." Henry ſecretly prohibited Anſelm from returning, unleſs he reſolved to conform himſelf to the laws and uſages of the kingdom; and the primate took up his reſidence at Lyons, in expectation, that the king would at laſt be obliged to yield the point, which was the preſent object of controverſy between them. Soon after, he was permitted to return to his monaſtery at Bec in Normandy; and Henry, beſides reſtoring to him the revenues of his ſee, treated him with the greateſt reſpect, and held ſeveral conferences with him, in order to ſoften his oppoſition, and bend him to ſubmiſſion [b]. The people of England, who thought all differences now accommodated, were inclined to blame their primate for abſenting himſelf ſo long from his charge; and he daily received letters from his partizans, repreſenting the neceſſity of his ſpeedy return. The total extinction, they told him, of religion and Chriſtianity was likely to enſue from the want of his fatherly care: The moſt ſhocking cuſtoms prevail in England: And the dread of his ſeverity being now

[z] Eadmer, p. 71. M. Paris, p. 40.
[a] Eadmer, p. 73. W. Malm. p. 226.
[b] Hoveden, p. 471.

removed,

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removed, ſodomy and the practice of wearing long hair gain ground among all ranks of men, and theſe enormities openly appear every where, without ſenſe of ſhame or fear of puniſhment[c].

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THE policy of the court of Rome has commonly been much admired; and men, judging by ſucceſs, have beſtowed the higheſt eulogies on that prudence by which a power, from ſuch ſlender beginnings, could advance, without force of arms, to eſtabliſh an univerſal and almoſt abſolute monarchy in Europe. But the wiſdom of ſo long a ſucceſſion of men, who filled the papal throne, and who were of ſuch different ages, tempers, and intereſts, is not intelligible, and could never have place in nature. The inſtrument, indeed, with which they wrought, the ignorance and ſuperſtition of the people, is ſo groſs an engine, of ſuch univerſal prevalence, and ſo little liable to accident or diſorder, that it may be ſucceſsful even in the moſt unſkilful hands; and ſcarce any indiſcretion can fruſtrate its operations. While the court of Rome was openly abandoned to the moſt flagrant diſorders, even while it was torn with ſchiſms and factions, the power of the church daily made a ſenſible progreſs in Europe; and the temerity of Gregory and the caution of Paſcal were equally fortunate in promoting it. The clergy, feeling the neceſſity, which they lay under, of being protected againſt the violence of princes, or vigour of the laws, were well pleaſed to adhere to a foreign head, who, being removed from the fear of the civil authority, could freely employ the power of the whole church in defending her antient or uſurped properties and privileges, when invaded in any particular country: The monks, deſirous of an independance on their dioceſans, profeſſed a ſtill more devoted attachment to the triple crown; and the ſtupid people poſſeſſed no ſcience or reaſon, which they could oppoſe to the moſt

[c] Eadmer, p. 81.

exorbitant

exorbitant pretenſions. Nonſenſe paſſed for demonſtration: The moſt criminal means were ſanctified by the piety of the end: Treaties were not ſuppoſed to be binding, where the intereſts of God were concerned: The ancient laws and cuſtoms of ſtates had no authority againſt a divine right: Impudent forgeries were received as authentic monuments of antiquity: And the champions of holy church, if ſucceſsful, were celebrated as heroes; if unfortunate, were worſhipped as martyrs; and all events thus turned out equally to the advantage of clerical uſurpations. Paſcal himſelf, the reigning pope, was, in the courſe of this very controverſy concerning inveſtitures, involved in circumſtances, and neceſſitated to follow a conduct, which would have drawn diſgrace and ruin on any temporal prince, that had been ſo unfortunate as to fall into a like ſituation. His perſon was ſeized by the emperor Henry V. and he was obliged, by a formal treaty, to reſign to that monarch, the right of granting inveſtitures, for which they had ſo long contended [d]. In order to add greater ſolemnity to this agreement, the emperor and pope communicated together on the ſame hoſte; one half of which was given to the prince, the other taken by the pontiff: The moſt tremendous imprecations were publicly denounced on either of them who ſhould violate the treaty: Yet no ſooner did Paſcal recover his liberty, than he revoked all his conceſſions, and pronounced the ſentence of excommunication againſt the emperor, who, in the end, was obliged to ſubmit to the terms required of him, and to yield up all his pretenſions, which he never could reſume [e].

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THE king of England had very nearly fallen into the ſame dangerous ſituation: Paſcal had already excommu-

[d] W. Malm. p. 167. [e] Padre Paolo ſopra benef. eccleſ. p. 112. W. Malmeſ. p. 170. Chron. Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 63. Sim. Dunelm. p. 233.

nicated

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nicated the earl of Mellent, and the other miniſters of Henry, who were inſtrumental in ſupporting his pretenſions [f]: He daily menaced the king himſelf with a like ſentence; and he ſuſpended the blow only to give him leiſure to prevent it by a timely ſubmiſſion. The malcontents waited impatiently for the opportunity of diſturbing his government by conſpiracies and inſurrections [g]: The king's beſt friends were anxious at the proſpect of an incident, which would ſet their religious and civil duties at variance: And the counteſs of Blois, his ſiſter, a princeſs of piety, who had great influence over him, was affrighted with the danger of her brother's eternal damnation [h]. Henry, on the other hand, ſeemed determined to run all hazards, rather than reſign a prerogative of ſuch importance, which had been enjoyed by all his predeceſſors; and it ſeemed probable, from his great prudence and ability, that he might be able to ſuſtain his rights, and finally prevail in the conteſt. While Paſcal and Henry thus ſtood mutually in awe of each other, it was the more eaſy to bring about an accommodation between them, and to find a medium, in which they might agree.

Compromiſe with Anſelm.

BEFORE biſhops took poſſeſſion of their dignities, they had formerly been accuſtomed to paſs through two ceremonials: They received from the hands of the ſovereign a ring and croſier, as ſymbols of their office; and this was called their *inveſtiture*: They alſo made thoſe ſubmiſſions to the prince, which were required of vaſſals by the rites of the feudal law, and which received the name of *homage*. And as the king might refuſe, both to grant the *inveſtiture* and to receive the *homage*, though the chapter had, by ſome canons of the middle age, been endowed with the right of election, the ſovereign had

[f] Eadmer, p. 79. [g] Ibid. p. 80. [h] Ibid. p. 79.

in

in reality the sole power of appointing prelates. Urban II. had equally deprived laymen of the rights of granting investiture and of receiving homage [i]: The emperors never were able, by all their wars and negociations, to make any distinction be admitted between them: The interposition of profane laymen, in any particular, was still represented as impious and abominable: And the church openly aspired to a total independance on the state. But Henry had put England, as well as Normandy, in such a situation as gave greater weight to his negotiations; and Pascal was for the present satisfied with his resigning the right of granting investitures, by which the spiritual dignity was supposed to be conferred; and he allowed the bishops to do homage for their temporal properties and privileges [k]. The pontiff was well pleased to have made this acquisition, which, he hoped, would in time involve the whole: And the king, anxious to procure an escape from a very dangerous situation, was content to retain some, though a more precarious authority, in the election of prelates.

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After the principal controversy was accommodated, it was not difficult to adjust the other differences. The pope allowed Anselm to communicate with the prelates, who had already received investitures from the crown; and he only required of them some submissions for their past misconduct [l]. He also granted Anselm a plenary power of remedying every other disorder, which, he said, might arise from the barbarousness of the country [m]. Such was the idea which the popes then entertained of the English; and nothing can be a stronger proof of the miserable ignorance in which that people were then plunged, than that a man, who sat on the papal throne, and who

[i] Eadmer, p. 91. W. Malm. p. 165. Sim. Dunelm. p. 230.
[k] Eadmer, p. 91. W. Malm. p. 164, 227. Hoveden, p. 471. M. Paris, p. 43. T. Rudb. p. 274. Brompton, p. 1000. Wilkins, p. 303. Chron. Dunst. p. 21. [l] Eadmer, p. 87. [m] Ibid. p. 91.

subsisted

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subsisted by absurdities and nonsense, should think himself intitled to treat them as barbarians.

During the course of these controversies, a synod was held at Westminster, where the king, intent only on the main dispute, allowed some canons of less consequence to be enacted, which tended to promote the usurpations of the clergy. The celibacy of priests was enjoined; a point which it was still found very difficult to carry into execution: And even laymen were not allowed to marry within the seventh degree of affinity [n]. By this contrivance, the pope augmented the profits, which he reaped from granting dispensations; and likewise those from divorces. For as the art of writing was then rare, and parish registers were not regularly kept, it was not easy to ascertain the degrees of affinity even among people of rank; and any man, who had money sufficient to pay for it, might obtain a divorce, on pretence that his wife was more nearly related to him than was permitted by the canons. The synod also passed a vote, prohibiting the laity from wearing long hair [o]. The aversion of the clergy to this mode was not confined to England. When the king went to Normandy, before he had conquered that province, the bishop of Seez, in a formal harangue, earnestly exhorted him to redress the manifold disorders under which the government laboured, and to oblige the people to poll their hair in a decent form. Henry, though he would not resign his prerogatives to the church, was very willing to part with his hair: He cut it in the form which they required of him, and obliged all the courtiers to imitate his example [p].

Wars abroad.

The acquisition of Normandy was a great point of Henry's ambition; being the ancient patrimony of his family, and the only territory, which, while in his possession, gave him any weight or consideration on the con-

[n] Eadmer, p. 67, 68. Selm. Conc. tol. ii. p 22. [o] Eadmer, p. 68. [p] Order. Vital. p. 816.

tinent:

tinent: But the injuſtice of his uſurpation was the ſource of great inquietude, involved him in frequent wars, and obliged him to impoſe on his Engliſh ſubjects thoſe many heavy and arbitrary taxes, of which all the hiſtorians of that age unanimouſly complain [q]. His nephew, William, was but ſix years of age, when he committed him to the care of Helie de St. Saen; and it is probable, that his reaſon for intruſting that important charge to a man of ſo unblemiſhed a character, was to prevent all malignant ſuſpicions, in caſe any accident ſhould befal the life of the young prince. He ſoon repented of his choice; but when he deſired to recover poſſeſſion of William's perſon, Helie withdrew his pupil, and carried him to the court of Fulk, count of Anjou, who gave him protection [r]. In proportion as the prince grew up to man's eſtate, he diſcovered virtues ſuitable to his birth; and wandering through different courts of Europe, excited the friendly compaſſion of many princes, and raiſed a general indignation againſt his uncle, who had ſo unjuſtly bereaved him of his inheritance. Lewis the Groſs, ſon of Philip, was at this time king of France, a brave and generous prince, who, having been obliged, during the life-time of his father, to fly into England, in order to eſcape the perſecutions of his ſtep-mother Bertrude, had been protected by Henry, and had thence conceived a perſonal friendſhip for him. But theſe ties were ſoon diſſolved after the acceſſion of Lewis, who found his intereſts to be in ſo many particulars oppoſite to thoſe of the Engliſh monarch, and who became ſenſible of the danger attending the annexation of Normandy to England. He joined, therefore, the counts of Anjou and Flanders in giving diſquiet to Henry's government; and this monarch, in order to defend his foreign dominions, found himſelf obliged

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1107.

1113.

[q] Eadmer, p. 83. Chron. Sax. p. 211, 212, 213, 219, 220, 228. H. Hunt. p. 380. Hoveden, p. 470. Ann. Waverl. p. 143.

[r] Order. Vital. p. 837.

to

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to go over to Normandy, where he reſided two years. The war which enſued among thoſe princes was attended
1110. with no memorable event, and produced only ſlight ſkirmiſhes on the frontiers, agreeably to the weak condition of the ſovereigns in that age, whenever their ſubjects were not rouzed by ſome great and urgent occaſion. Henry, by contracting his eldeſt ſon, William, to the daughter of Fulk, detached that prince from the alliance, and obliged the others to come to an accommodation with him. This peace was not of long duration. His nephew, William, retired to the court of Baldwin, earl of Flanders, who eſpouſed his cauſe; and the king of France, having ſoon after, for other reaſons, joined the party, a new war was kindled in Normandy, which produced no
1118. event more memorable than had attended the former. At laſt the death of Baldwin, who was ſlain in an action near Eu, gave ſome reſpite to Henry, and enabled him to carry on war with more advantage againſt his enemies.

Lewis, finding himſelf unable to wreſt Normandy from the king by force of arms, had recourſe to the dangerous expedient, of applying to the ſpiritual power, and of affording the eccleſiaſtics a pretence to interpoſe in the temporal concerns of princes. He carried young William to a general council, which was aſſembled at Rheims by pope Calixtus II. preſented the Norman prince to them, complained of the manifeſt uſurpation and injuſtice of Henry, craved the aſſiſtance of the church for reinſtating the true heir in his dominions, and repreſented the enormity of detaining in captivity ſo brave a prince as Robert, one of the moſt eminent champions of the croſs, and who, by that very quality, was placed under the immediate protection of the holy ſee. Henry knew how to defend the rights of his crown with vigour, and yet with dexterity. He had ſent over the Engliſh biſhops to this ſynod; but at the ſame time had warned them, that,

if

if any farther claims were ſtarted by the pope or the eccle- CHAP. VI.
ſiaſtics, he was determined to adhere to the laws and cuſ- 1119.
toms of England, and maintain the prerogatives tranſmitted to him by his anceſtors. "Go," ſaid he to them, "ſalute the pope in my name; hear his apoſtolical pre-"cepts; but take care to bring none of his new inven-"tions into my kingdom." Finding, however, that it would be eaſier for him to elude than oppoſe the efforts of Calixtus, he gave his ambaſſadors orders to gain the pope and his favourites by liberal preſents and promiſes. The complaints of the Norman prince were thenceforth heard with great coldneſs by the council; and Calixtus confeſſed, after a conference, which he had the ſame ſummer with Henry, and when that prince probably renewed his preſents, that, of all men, whom he had ever yet been acquainted with, he was, beyond compariſon, the moſt eloquent and perſuaſive.

THE warlike meaſures of Lewis proved as ineffectual as his intrigues. He had laid a ſcheme for ſurpriſing Noyon; but Henry, having received intelligence of the deſign, marched to the relief of the place, and ſuddenly attacked the French at Brenneville, as they were advancing towards it. A ſharp conflict enſued; where prince William behaved with great bravery, and the king himſelf was in the moſt imminent danger. He was wounded in the head by Criſpin, a gallant Norman officer, who had followed the fortunes of William [s]; but being rather animated than terrified by the blow, he immediately beat his antagoniſt to the ground, and ſo encouraged his troops by the example, that they put the French to total rout, and had very nearly taken their king priſoner. The dignity of the perſons, engaged in this ſkirmiſh, rendered it the moſt memorable action of the war: For in other reſpects, it was not of great importance. There were nine

[s] H. Hunt. p. 381. M. Paris, p. 47. Diceto, p. 503.

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1119. hundred horſemen, who fought on both ſides; yet were there only two perſons ſlain. The reſt were defended by that heavy armour, worn by the cavalry in thoſe times [t]. An accommodation ſoon after enſued between the kings of France and England; and the intereſts of young William were entirely neglected in it.

Death of prince William.

1120. But this public proſperity of Henry was much overbalanced by a domeſtic calamity, which befel him. His only ſon, William, had now reached his eighteenth year; and the king, from the facility with which he himſelf had uſurped the crown, dreading that a like revolution might ſubvert his family, had taken care to have him recognized ſucceſſor by the ſtates of the kingdom, and had carried him over to Normandy, that he might receive the homage of the barons of that dutchy. The king, on his return, ſet ſail from Barfleur, and was ſoon carried by a fair wind out of ſight of land. The prince was detained by ſome accident; and his ſailors, as well as their captain, Thomas Fitz-Stephens, having ſpent the interval in drinking, were ſo fluſtered, that, being in a hurry to follow the king, they heedleſsly carried the ſhip on a rock, where ſhe immediately foundered. William was put into the long-boat, and had got clear of the ſhip; when hearing the cries of his natural ſiſter, the counteſs of Perche, he ordered the ſeamen to row back in hopes of ſaving her: But the numbers, who then crowded in, ſoon ſunk the boat; and the prince with all his retinue periſhed. Above an hundred and forty young noblemen, of the principal families of England and Normandy, were loſt on this occaſion. A butcher of Roüen was the only perſon on board who eſcaped [u]: He clung to the maſt, and was taken up next morning by fiſhermen. Fitz-

[t] Order. Vital. p. 854.

[u] Sim. Dunelm. p. 242. Alured Beverl. p. 143.

Stephens,

Stephens, the captain, took hold alſo of the maſt; but being informed by the butcher, that prince William had periſhed, he ſaid, that he would not ſurvive the diſaſter; and he threw himſelf headlong into the ſea [w]. Henry entertained hopes for three days, that his ſon had put into ſome diſtant port of England: But when certain intelligence of the calamity was brought him, he fainted away; and it was remarked, that he never after was ſeen to ſmile, nor ever recovered his wonted chearfulneſs [x]. CHAP. VI. 1120.

THE death of William may be regarded, in one reſpect, as a misfortune to the Engliſh; becauſe it was the immediate ſource of thoſe civil wars, which, after the demiſe of the king, cauſed ſuch confuſion in the kingdom: But it is remarkable, that the young prince had entertained a violent averſion to the natives; and had been heard to threaten, that, when he ſhould be king, he would make them draw the plough, and would turn them into beaſts of burthen. Theſe prepoſſeſſions he inherited from his father, who, though he was wont, when it might ſerve his purpoſe, to value himſelf on his birth, as a native of England [y], ſhowed, in the courſe of his government, an extreme prejudice againſt that people. All hopes of preferment, to eccleſiaſtical as well as civil dignities, were denied them during this whole reign; and any foreigner, however ignorant or worthleſs, was ſure to have the preference in every competition [z]. As the Engliſh had given no diſturbance to the government during the courſe of fifty years, this inveterate antipathy, in a prince of ſo much temper as well as penetration, forms a preſumption, that the Engliſh of that age were ſtill a rude and barbarous people even compared to the Normans, and impreſſes us with no very favourable idea of the Anglo-Saxon manners.

[w] Order. Vital. p. 868. [x] Hoveden, p. 476. Order. Vital. p. 869. [y] Gul. Neub. lib. 1. cap. 3. [z] Eadmer, p. 110.

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1120. Prince William left no children; and the king had not now any legitimate iſſue; except one daughter, Matilda, whom, in 1110, he had betrothed, though only eight years of age [a], to the emperor Henry V. and whom he had then ſent over to be educated in Germany *. But as her abſence from the kingdom, and her marriage into a foreign family, might endanger the ſucceſſion, Henry, who was now a widower, was induced to marry in hopes of having male heirs; and he made his addreſſes to Adelais, daughter of Godfrey, duke of Lovaine, and niece of pope Calixtus, a young princeſs of an amiable perſon [b]. But Adelais brought him no children; and the prince, who was moſt likely to diſpute the ſucceſſion, and even the immediate poſſeſſion of the crown, recovered hopes of ſubverting his rival, who had ſucceſſively ſeized all his patrimonial dominions. William, the ſon of duke Robert, was ſtill protected in the French court; and as Henry's connections with the count of Anjou were broken off by the death of his ſon, Fulk joined the party of the unfortunate prince, gave him his daughter in marriage, and aſſiſted him in raiſing diſturbances in Normandy. But Henry found the means of drawing off the count of Anjou, by forming anew with him a nearer connexion than the former, and one more material to the intereſts of that count's family. The emperor, his ſon-in-law, dying without iſſue, he beſtowed his daughter on Geoffrey, the eldeſt ſon of Fulk, and endeavoured to enſure her ſucceſſion, by having her recognized heir to all his dominions, and obliging the barons both of Normandy and England to ſwear fealty to her. He hoped, that the choice of this huſband would be more agreeable to all his ſubjects than that of the emperor; as ſecuring them from the fears of falling under the dominion of a great and diſtant potentate, who might bring them into ſubjection, and

King's ſecond marriage.

1121.

1127.

[a] Chron. Sax. p. 215. W. Malm. p. 166. Order. Vital. p. 833.

* See note [M] at the end of the volume.

[b] Chron. Sax. p. 223. W. Malm. p. 165.

reduce

reduce their country to the rank of a province: But the barons were diſpleaſed, that a ſtep ſo material to national intereſts had been taken without conſulting them[c]; and Henry had experienced too ſenſibly the turbulence of their diſpoſition, not to dread the effects of their reſentment. It ſeemed probable, that his nephew's party might gain force from the encreaſe of the malcontents: An acceſſion of power, which that prince acquired a little after, tended to render his pretenſions ſtill more dangerous. Charles, earl of Flanders, being aſſaſſinated during the celebration of divine ſervice, king Lewis immediately put the young prince in poſſeſſion of that county, to which he had pretenſions, in the right of his grandmother Matilda, wife to the Conqueror. But William ſurvived a very little time this piece of good fortune, which ſeemed to open the way to ſtill farther proſperity. He was killed in a ſkirmiſh with the landgrave of Alſace, his competitor for Flanders; and his death put an end, for the preſent, to the jealouſy and inquietude of Henry. CHAP. VI. 1128.

THE chief merit of this monarch's government conſiſts in the profound tranquillity, which he eſtabliſhed and maintained throughout all his dominions during the greateſt part of his reign. The mutinous barons were retained in ſubjection; and his neighbours, in every attempt which they made upon him, found him ſo well prepared, that they were diſcouraged from continuing or renewing their enterprizes. In order to repreſs the incurſions of the Welſh, he brought over ſome Flemings in the year 1111, and ſettled them in Pembrokeſhire, where they long maintained a different language, and cuſtoms, and manners, from their neighbours. Though his government ſeems to have been arbitrary in England, it was judicious and prudent; and was as little oppreſſive as the neceſſity of his

[c] W. Malm. p. 175. The annals of Waverly, p. 150. ſay, that the king aſked and obtained the conſent of all the barons.

CHAP. VI. 1128.

affairs would permit. He wanted not attention to the redreſs of grievances; and hiſtorians mention in particular the levying of purveyance, which he endeavoured to moderate and reſtrain. The tenants in the king's demeſne lands were at that time obliged to ſupply *gratis* the court with proviſions, and to furniſh carriages on the ſame hard terms, when the king made a progreſs, as he did frequently, into any of the counties. Theſe exactions were ſo grievous, and levied in ſo licentious a manner, that the farmers, when they heard of the court's approach, often deſerted their houſes, as if an enemy had invaded the country[d]; and ſheltered their perſons and families in the woods, from the inſults of the king's retinue. Henry prohibited thoſe enormities, and puniſhed the perſons guilty of them by cutting off their hands, legs, or other members[e]. But the prerogative was perpetual; the remedy applied by Henry was temporary; and the violence itſelf of this remedy, ſo far from giving ſecurity to the people, was only a proof of the ferocity of the government, and threatened a quick return of like abuſes.

One great and difficult object of the king's prudence was the guarding againſt the encroachments of the court of Rome, and protecting the liberties of the church of England. The pope, in the year 1101, had ſent Guy, archbiſhop of Vienne, as legate into Britain; and though he was the firſt that for many years had appeared there in that character, and his commiſſion gave general ſurprize[f], the king, who was then in the commencement of his reign, and was involved in many difficulties, was obliged to ſubmit to this encroachment on his authority. But in the year 1116, Anſelm, abbot of St. Sabas, who was coming over with a like legantine commiſſion, was pro-

[d] Eadmer, p. 94. Chron. Sax. p. 212. [e] Eadmer, p. 94.
[f] Ibid. p. 58.

hibited

CHAP. VI. 1128.

hibited from entering the kingdom [g]; and pope Calixtus, who in his turn was then labouring under many difficulties, by reaſon of the pretenſions of Gregory, an anti-pope, was obliged to promiſe, that he never would for the future, except when ſolicited by the king himſelf, ſend any legate into England [h]. Notwithſtanding this engagement, the pope, as ſoon as he had ſuppreſſed his antagoniſt, granted the cardinal de Crema a legantine commiſſion for that kingdom; and the king, who by reaſon of his nephew's intrigues and invaſions, found himſelf at that time in a dangerous ſituation, was obliged to ſubmit to the exerciſe of this commiſſion [i]. A ſynod was called by the legate at London; where, among other canons, a vote paſſed, enacting ſevere penalties on the marriage of the clergy [k]. The cardinal, in a public harangue, declared it to be an unpardonable enormity, that a prieſt ſhould dare to conſecrate and touch the body of Chriſt immediately after he had riſen from the ſide of a ſtrumpet: For that was the decent appellation which he gave to the wives of the clergy. But it happened, that the very next night, the officers of juſtice, breaking into a diſorderly houſe, found the cardinal in bed with a courtezan [l]; an incident which threw ſuch ridicule upon him, that he immediately ſtole out of the kingdom: The ſynod broke up; and the canons againſt the marriage of clergymen were worſe executed than ever [m].

HENRY, in order to prevent this alternate revolution of conceſſions and encroachments, ſent William, then archbiſhop of Canterbury, to remonſtrate with the court

[g] Hoveden, p. 474.
[h] Eadmer, p. 125, 137, 138.
[i] Chron. Sax. p. 229.
[k] Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 34.
[l] Hoveden, p. 478. M. Paris, p. 48. Matth. Weſt. ad ann. 1125. H. Huntingdon, p. 382. It is remarkable, that this laſt writer, who was a clergyman as well as the others, makes an apology for uſing ſuch freedom with the fathers of the church; but ſays, that the fact was notorious, and ought not to be concealed.
[m] Chron. Sax. p. 234.

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of Rome againſt thoſe abuſes, and to aſſert the liberties of the Engliſh church. It was a uſual maxim with every
1128. pope, when he found that he could not prevail in any pretenſion, to grant princes or ſtates a power which they had always exerciſed, to reſume at a proper juncture the claim which ſeemed to be reſigned, and to pretend, that the civil magiſtrate had poſſeſſed the authority only from a ſpecial indulgence of the Roman pontiff. After this manner, the pope, finding that the French nation would not admit his claim of granting inveſtitures, had paſſed a bull, giving the king that authority; and he now practiſed a like invention to elude the complaints of the king of England. He made the archbiſhop of Canterbury his legate, renewed his commiſſion from time to time, and ſtill pretended, that the rights, which that prelate had ever exerciſed as metropolitan, were entirely derived from the indulgence of the apoſtolic ſee. The Engliſh princes, and Henry in particular, who were glad to avoid any immediate conteſt of ſo dangerous a nature, commonly acquieſced by their ſilence in theſe pretenſions of the court of Rome *.

1131. As every thing in England remained in tranquillity, Henry took the opportunity of paying a viſit to Normandy, to which he was invited, as well by his affection for that country, as by his tenderneſs for his daughter, the empreſs Matilda, who was always his favourite. Some
1133. time after, that princeſs was delivered of a ſon, who received the name of Henry; and the king, farther to enſure her ſucceſſion, made all the nobility of England and Normandy renew the oath of fealty, which they had already ſworn to her [n]. The joy of this event, and the ſatisfaction which he reaped from his daughter's company, who bore ſucceſſively two other ſons, made his reſidence

* See note [N] at the end of the volume. [n] W. Malm. p. 177.

in

in Normandy very agreeable to him [o]; and he seemed determined to pass the rest of his days in that country; when an incursion of the Welsh obliged him to think of returning into England. He was preparing for the journey, but was seized with a sudden illness at St. Denis le Forment, from eating too plentifully of lampreys, a food which always agreed better with his palate than his constitution [p]. He died in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign; leaving by will his daughter, Matilda, heir of all his dominions, without making any mention of her husband Geoffrey, who had given him several causes of displeasure [q]. CHAP. VI. 1135. 1st of Dec. Death

and character of Henry.

THIS prince was one of the most accomplished that has filled the English throne, and possessed all the great qualities both of body and mind, natural and acquired, which could fit him for the high station, to which he attained. His person was manly, his countenance engaging, his eyes clear, serene, and penetrating. The affability of his address encouraged those who might be overawed by the sense of his dignity or of his wisdom; and though he often indulged his facetious humour, he knew how to temper it with discretion, and ever kept at a distance from all indecent familiarities with his courtiers. His superior eloquence and judgment would have given him an ascendant even had he been born in a private station; and his personal bravery would have procured him respect, though it had been less supported by art and policy. By his great progress in literature, he acquired the name of *Beau-clerc* or the scholar: But his application to those sedentary pursuits abated nothing of the activity and vigilance of his government; and though the learning of that age was better fitted to corrupt than improve the understanding, his natural good sense preserved itself untainted both from

[o] H. Hunt. p. 315. [p] H. Hunt. p. 385. M. Paris, p. 50. [q] W. Malm. p. 178.

the

CHAP. VI.

1135. the pedantry and superstition, which were then so prevalent among men of letters. His temper was susceptible of the sentiments as well of friendship as of resentment [r]; and his ambition, though high, might be deemed moderate and reasonable, had not his conduct towards his brother and nephew showed that he was too much disposed to sacrifice to it all the maxims of justice and equity. But the total incapacity of Robert for government afforded his younger brother a reason or pretence for seizing the sceptre both of England and Normandy; and when violence and usurpation are once begun, necessity obliges a prince to continue in the same criminal course, and engages him in measures, which his better judgment and sounder principles would otherwise have induced him to reject with warmth and indignation.

King Henry was much addicted to women; and historians mention no less than seven illegitimate sons and six daughters born to him [s]. Hunting was also one of his favourite amusements; and he exercised great rigour against those who encroached on the royal forests, which were augmented during this reign [t], though their number and extent were already too great. To kill a stag was as criminal as to murder a man: He made all the dogs be mutilated, which were kept on the borders of his forests: And he sometimes deprived his subjects of the liberty of hunting on their own lands, or even cutting their own woods. In other respects, he executed justice, and that with rigour; the best maxim which a prince in that age could follow. Stealing was first made capital in this reign [u]: False coining, which was then a very common crime, and by which the money had been extremely debased,

[r] Order. Vital. p. 805.
[s] Gul. Gemet. lib. 8. cap. 29.
[t] W. Malm. p. 179.
[u] Sim. Dunelm. p. 231. Brompton, p. 1000. Flor. Wigorn. p. 653. Hoveden, p. 471.

was

was punished severely by Henry [w]. Near fifty criminals of this kind were at one time hanged or mutilated; and though these punishments seem to have been exercised in a manner somewhat arbitrary, they were grateful to the people, more attentive to present advantages, than jealous of general laws. There is a code, which passes under the name of Henry I. but the best antiquaries have agreed to think it spurious. It is however a very ancient compilation, and may be useful to instruct us in the manners and customs of the times. We learn from it, that a great distinction was then made between the English and Normans, much to the advantage of the latter [x]. The deadly feuds and the liberty of private revenge, which had been avowed by the Saxon laws, were still continued, and were not yet wholly illegal [y].

CHAP. VI. 1135.

AMONG the laws, granted on the king's accession, it is remarkable that the re-union of the civil and ecclesiastical courts, as in the Saxon times, was enacted [z]. But this law, like the articles of his charter, remained without effect, probably from the opposition of archbishop Anselm.

HENRY on his accession, granted a charter to London, which seems to have been the first step towards rendering that city a corporation. By this charter, the city was empowered to keep the farm of Middlesex at three hundred pounds a year, to elect its own sheriff and justiciary, and to hold pleas of the crown; and it was exempted from Scot, Danegelt, trials by combat, and lodging the king's retinue. These, with a confirmation of the privileges of their court of Hustings, wardmotes, and common halls, and their liberty of hunting in Middlesex and Surrey, are the chief articles of this charter [a].

[w] Sim. Dunelm. p. 231. Brompton, p. 1000. Hoveden, p. 471. Annal. Waverl. p. 149. [x] LL. Hen. I. § 18, 75. [y] LL. Hen. § 82.
[z] Spellm. p. 305. Blackstone, vol. iii. p. 63. Coke, 2. Inst. 70.
[a] Lambardi Archaionomia ex edit. Twisden Wilkins, p. 235.

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1135. It is said[b], that this prince, from indulgence to his tenants, changed the rents of his demeſnes, which were formerly paid in kind, into money, which was more eaſily remitted to the Exchequer. But the great ſcarcity of coin would render that commutation difficult to be executed, while at the ſame time proviſions could not be ſent to a diſtant quarter of the kingdom. This affords a probable reaſon, why the ancient kings of England ſo frequently changed their place of abode: They carried their court from one palace to another, that they might conſume upon the ſpot the revenue of their ſeveral demeſnes.

[b] Dial. de Scaccario, lib. 1. cap. 7.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

STEPHEN.

Acceſſion of Stephen——War with Scotland——Inſurrection in favour of Matilda——Stephen taken priſoner——Matilda crowned——Stephen releaſed——Reſtored to the crown——Continuation of the civil wars——Compromiſe between the king and prince Henry——Death of the king.

IN the progreſs and ſettlement of the feudal law, the male ſucceſſion to fiefs had taken place ſome time before the female was admitted; and eſtates, being conſidered as military benefices, not as property, were tranſmitted to ſuch only as could ſerve in the armies, and perform in perſon the conditions upon which they were originally granted. But when the continuance of rights, during ſome generations, in the ſame family, had, in a great meaſure, obliterated the primitive idea, the females were gradually admitted to the poſſeſſion of feudal property; and the ſame revolution of principles, which procured them the inheritance of private eſtates, naturally introduced their ſucceſſion to government and authority. The failure, therefore, of male-heirs to the kingdom of England and dutchy of Normandy, ſeemed to leave the ſucceſſion open, without a rival, to the empreſs Matilda; and as Henry had made all his vaſſals in both ſtates ſwear fealty to her, he preſumed, that they would not eaſily be induced to depart at once from her hereditary right, and from their own reiterated oaths and engagements. But the irregular manner, in which he himſelf had acquired the crown, might have inſtructed him, that neither

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ther his Norman nor Engliſh ſubjects were as yet capable of adhering to a ſtrict rule of government; and as every precedent of this kind ſeems to give authority to new uſurpations, he had reaſon to dread, even from his own family, ſome invaſion of his daughter's title, which he had taken ſuch pains to eſtabliſh.

ADELA, daughter of William the conqueror, had been married to Stephen, count of Blois, and had brought him ſeveral ſons; among whom, Stephen and Henry, the two youngeſt, had been invited over to England by the late king, and had received great honours, riches, and preferment from the zealous friendſhip, which that prince bore to every one, that had been ſo fortunate as to acquire his favour and good opinion. Henry, who had betaken himſelf to the eccleſiaſtical profeſſion, was created abbot of Glaſtenbury and biſhop of Wincheſter; and though theſe dignities were conſiderable, Stephen had, from his uncle's liberality, attained eſtabliſhments ſtill more ſolid and durable [a]. The king had married him to Matilda, who was daughter and heir of Euſtace count of Boulogne, and who brought him, beſides that feudal ſovereignty in France, an immenſe property in England, which, in the diſtribution of lands, had been conferred by the conqueror on the family of Boulogne. Stephen alſo by this marriage acquired a new connexion with the royal family of England; as Mary, his wife's mother, was ſiſter to David, the reigning king of Scotland, and to Matilda, the firſt wife of Henry, and mother of the empreſs. The king, ſtill imagining, that he ſtrengthened the intereſts of his family by the aggrandizement of Stephen, took pleaſure in enriching him by the grant of new poſſeſſions; and he conferred on him the great eſtate forfeited by Robert Mallet in England, and that forfeited by the earl of Mortaigne in Normandy.

[a] Gul. Neubr. p. 360. Brompton, p. 1023.

Stephen,

Stephen, in return, profeſſed great attachment to his uncle; and appeared ſo zealous for the ſucceſſion of Matilda, that, when the barons ſwore fealty to that princeſs, he contended with Robert, earl of Gloceſter, the king's natural ſon, who ſhould firſt be admitted to give her this teſtimony of devoted zeal and fidelity [b]. Meanwhile, he continued to cultivate, by every art of popularity, the friendſhip and affection of the Engliſh nation; and many virtues, with which he ſeemed to be endowed, favoured the ſucceſs of his intentions. By his bravery, activity, and vigour, he acquired the eſteem of the barons: By his generoſity, and by an affable and familiar addreſs, unſual in that age among men of his high quality, he obtained the affections of the people, particularly of the Londoners [c]. And though he dared not to take any ſteps towards his farther grandeur, leſt he ſhould expoſe himſelf to the jealouſy of ſo penetrating a prince as Henry; he ſtill hoped, that, by accumulating riches and power, and by acquiring popularity, he might in time be able to open his way to the throne. CHAP. VII. 1135.

No ſooner had Henry breathed his laſt, than Stephen, inſenſible to all the ties of gratitude and fidelity, and blind to danger, gave full reins to his criminal ambition, and truſted, that, even without any previous intrigue, the celerity of his enterprize and the boldneſs of his attempt might overcome the weak attachment, which the Engliſh and Normans in that age bore to the laws, and to the rights of their ſovereign. He haſtened over to England; and though the citizens of Dover, and thoſe of Canterbury, apprized of his purpoſe, ſhut their gates againſt him, he ſtopped not till he arrived at London, where ſome of the lower rank, inſtigated by his emiſſaries, as well as moved by his general popularity, immediately ſaluted him king. His next point was to acquire the

[b] W. Malm. p. 192. [c] Ibid. p. 179. Geſt. Steph. p. 928.

good

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1135. good will of the clergy; and by performing the ceremony of his coronation, to put himself in possession of the throne, from which, he was confident, it would not be easy afterwards to expel him. His brother, the bishop of Winchester, was useful to him in these capital articles: Having gained Roger, bishop of Salisbury, who, though he owed a great fortune and advancement to the favour of the late king, preserved no sense of gratitude to that prince's family, he applied, in conjunction with that prelate, to William, archbishop of Canterbury, and required him, in virtue of his office, to give the royal unction to Stephen. The primate, who, as all the others, had sworn fealty to Matilda, refused to perform this ceremony; but his opposition was overcome by an expedient equally dishonourable with the other steps, by which this revolution was effected. Hugh Bigod, steward of the household, made oath before the primate, that the late king, on his death-bed, had shown a dissatisfaction with his daughter Matilda, and had expressed his intention of leaving the count of Boulogne heir to all his dominions [d]. William, either believing or feigning to believe Bigod's testimony, anointed Stephen, and put the crown upon

22d Decem. his head: From this religious ceremony, that prince, without any shadow either of hereditary title or consent of the nobility or people, was allowed to proceed to the exercise of sovereign authority. Very few barons attended his coronation [e]; but none opposed his usurpation, however unjust or flagrant. The sentiment of religion, which, if corrupted into superstition, has often little efficacy in fortifying the duties of civil society, was not affected by the multiplied oaths, taken in favour of Matilda, and only rendered the people obedient to a prince, who was countenanced by the clergy, and who had received

[d] Matth. Paris, p. 51. Diceto, p. 505. Chron. Dunst. p. 23.
[e] Brompton, p. 1023.

from

from the primate the rite of royal unction and conſecration [f]. CHAP. VII.

STEPHEN, that he might farther ſecure his tottering throne, paſſed a charter, in which he made liberal promiſes to all orders of men; to the clergy, that he would ſpeedily fill all vacant benefices, and would never levy the rents of any of them during the vacancy; to the nobility, that he ſhould reduce the royal foreſts to their ancient boundaries, and correct all encroachments; and to the people, that he would remit the tax of Danegelt and reſtore the laws of king Edward [g]. The late king had a great treaſure at Wincheſter, amounting to a hundred thouſand pounds: And Stephen, by ſeizing this money, immediately turned againſt Henry's family the precaution, which that prince had employed for their grandeur and ſecurity: An event, which naturally attends the policy of amaſſing treaſures. By means of this money, the uſurper inſured the compliance, though not the attachment, of the principal clergy and nobility; but not truſting to this frail ſecurity, he invited over from the continent, particularly from Brittany and Flanders, great numbers of thoſe bravos or diſorderly ſoldiers, with whom every country in Europe, by reaſon of the general ill police and turbulent government, extremely abounded [h]. Theſe mercenary troops guarded his throne, by the terrors of the ſword; and Stephen, that he might alſo overawe all malcontents by new and additional terrors of religion, procured a bull from Rome, which ratified his title, and which the pope, ſeeing this prince in actual poſſeſſion of the throne, and pleaſed with an ap- 1135.

[f] Such ſtreſs was formerly laid on the rite of coronation, that the monkiſh writers never give any prince the title of king, till he is crowned; though he had for ſome time been in poſſeſſion of the crown, and exerciſed all the powers of ſovereignty.

[g] W. Malmeſ. p. 179. Hoveden, p. 482. [h] W. Malm. p. 179.

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peal to his authority in ſecular controverſies, very readily granted him [i].

1136. MATILDA and her huſband, Geoffrey, were as unfortunate in Normandy as they had been in England. The Norman nobility, moved by an hereditary animoſity againſt the Angevins, firſt applied to Theobald, count of Blois, Stephen's elder brother, for protection and aſſiſtance; but hearing afterwards, that Stephen had got poſſeſſion of the Engliſh crown, and having many of them the ſame reaſons as formerly for deſiring a continuance of their union with that kingdom, they transferred their allegiance to Stephen, and put him in poſſeſſion of their government. Lewis the younger, the reigning king of France, accepted the homage of Euſtace, Stephen's eldeſt ſon, for the dutchy; and the more to corroborate his connexions with that family, he betrothed his ſiſter, Conſtantia, to the young prince. The count of Blois reſigned all his pretenſions, and received in lieu of them, an annual penſion of two thouſand marks; and Geoffrey himſelf was obliged to conclude a truce for two years with Stephen, on condition of the king's paying him, during that time, a penſion of five thouſand [k]. Stephen, who had taken a journey to Normandy, finiſhed all theſe tranſactions in perſon, and ſoon after returned to England.

ROBERT, earl of Gloceſter, natural ſon of the late king, was a man of honour and ability; and as he was much attached to the intereſts of his ſiſter, Matilda and zealous for the lineal ſucceſſion, it was chiefly from his intrigues and reſiſtance, that the king had reaſon to dread a new revolution of government. This nobleman, who was in Normandy when he received intelligence of Stephen's acceſſion, found himſelf much embarraſſed con-

[i] Hagulſtad. p. 259, 313. [k] M. Paris, p. 52.

cerning

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cerning the meaſures, which he ſhould purſue in that difficult emergency. To ſwear allegiance to the uſurper appeared to him diſhonourable, and a breach of his oath to Matilda: To refuſe giving this pledge of his fidelity was to baniſh himſelf from England, and be totally incapacitated from ſerving the royal family, or contributing to their reſtoration [l]. He offered Stephen to do him homage and to take the oath of fealty; but with an expreſs condition, that the king ſhould maintain all his ſtipulations, and ſhould never invade any of Robert's rights or dignities: And Stephen, though ſenſible, that this reſerve, ſo unuſual in itſelf, and ſo unbefitting the duty of a ſubject, was meant only to afford Robert a pretence for a revolt on the firſt favourable opportunity, was obliged, by the numerous friends and retainers of that nobleman, to receive him on thoſe terms [m]. The clergy, who could ſcarcely, at this time, be deemed ſubjects to the crown, imitated that dangerous example: They annexed to their oaths of allegiance this condition, that they were only bound ſo long as the king defended the eccleſiaſtical liberties, and ſupported the diſcipline of the church [n]. The barons, in return for their ſubmiſſion, exacted terms ſtill more deſtructive of public peace, as well as of royal authority: Many of them required the right of fortifying their caſtles, and of putting themſelves in a poſture of defence; and the king found himſelf totally unable to refuſe his conſent to this exorbitant demand [o]. All England was immediately filled with thoſe fortreſſes, which the noblemen garriſoned either with their vaſſals, or with licentious ſoldiers, who flocked to them from all quarters. Unbounded rapine was exerciſed upon the people for the maintenance of theſe troops; and private animoſities, which had with difficulty been reſtrained by

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[l] Malmeſ. p. 179. [m] Ibid. M. Paris, p. 51. [n] W. Malm. p. 179. [o] Ibid. p. 180.

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law, now breaking out without controul, rendered England a ſcene of uninterrupted violence and devaſtation. Wars between the nobles were carried on with the utmoſt fury in every quarter; the barons even aſſumed the right of coining money, and of exerciſing, without appeal, every act of juriſdiction [p]; and the inferior gentry, as well as the people, finding no defence from the laws, during this total diſſolution of ſovereign authority, were obliged, for their immediate ſafety, to pay court to ſome neighbouring chieftain, and to purchaſe his protection, both by ſubmitting to his exactions, and by aſſiſting him in his rapine upon others. The erection of one caſtle proved the immediate cauſe of building many others; and even thoſe, who obtained not the king's permiſſion, thought that they were entitled, by the great principle of ſelf-preſervation, to put themſelves on an equal footing with their neighbours, who commonly were alſo their enemies and rivals. The ariſtocratical power, which is uſually ſo tyrannical and oppreſſive in the feudal governments, had now riſen to its utmoſt height, during the reign of a prince, who, though endowed with vigour and ability, had uſurped the throne without the pretence of a title, and who was neceſſitated to tolerate in others the ſame violence, to which he himſelf had been beholden for his ſovereignty.

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But Stephen was not of a diſpoſition to ſubmit long to theſe uſurpations, without making ſome effort for the recovery of royal authority. Finding that the legal prerogatives of the crown were reſiſted and abridged, he was alſo tempted to make his power the ſole meaſure of his conduct; and to violate all thoſe conceſſions, which he himſelf had made on his acceſſion [q], as well as the antient privileges of his ſubjects. The mercenary ſoldiers, who

[p] Trivet, p. 19. Gul. Neub. p. 372. Chron. Heming. p. 487. Brompton, p. 1035. [q] W. Malm. p. 180. M. Paris, p. 51.

chiefly

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chiefly supported his authority, having exhausted the royal treasure, subsisted by depredations; and every place was filled with the best grounded complaints against the government. The earl of Gloucester, having now settled with his friends the plan of an insurrection, retired beyond sea, sent the king a defiance, solemnly renounced his allegiance, and upbraided him with the breach of those conditions, which had been annexed to the oath of fealty, sworn by that nobleman[r]. David, king of Scotland, appeared at the head of an army in defence of his niece's title, and penetrating into Yorkshire, committed the most barbarous devastations on that country. The fury of his massacres and ravages enraged the northern nobility, who might otherwise have been inclined to join him; and William earl of Albemarle, Robert de Ferrers, William Piercy, Robert de Brus, Roger Moubray, Ilbert Lacy, Walter d'Espec, powerful barons in those parts, assembled an army, with which they encamped at North-Allerton, and awaited the arrival of the enemy. A great battle was here fought, called the battle of the *Standard*, from a high crucifix, erected by the English on a waggon, and carried along with the army as a military ensign. The king of Scots was defeated, and he himself, as well as his son Henry, narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the English. This success overawed the malcontents in England, and might have given some stability to Stephen's throne, had he not been so elated with prosperity as to engage in a controversy with the clergy, who were at that time an overmatch for any monarch.

1136. 1137. 1138. War with Scotland. 22d August.

THOUGH the great power of the church, in ancient times, weakened the authority of the crown, and interrupted the course of the laws, it may be doubted, whether, in ages of such violence and outrage, it was not rather advantageous that some limits were set to the power of the sword, both in the hands of the prince and nobles,

[r] W. Malm. p. 180.

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1139. and that men were taught to pay regard to ſome principles and privileges. The chief misfortune was, that the prelates, on ſome occaſions, acted entirely as barons, employed military power againſt their ſovereign or their neighbours, and thereby often encreaſed thoſe diſorders, which it was their duty to repreſs. The biſhop of Saliſbury, in imitation of the nobility, had built two ſtrong caſtles, one at Sherborne, another at the Devizes, and had laid the foundations of a third at Malmeſbury: His nephew, Alexander, biſhop of Lincoln, had erected a fortreſs at Newark: And Stephen, who was now ſenſible from experience of the miſchiefs attending theſe multiplied citadels, reſolved to begin with deſtroying thoſe of the clergy, who by their function ſeemed leſs intitled than the barons to ſuch military ſecurities [s]. Making pretence of a fray, which had ariſen in court between the retinue of the biſhop of Saliſbury and that of the earl of Britanny, he ſeized both that prelate and the biſhop of Lincoln, threw them into priſon, and obliged them by menaces to deliver up thoſe places of ſtrength which they had lately erected [t].

HENRY, biſhop of Wincheſter, the king's brother, being armed with a legantine commiſſion, now conceived himſelf to be an eccleſiaſtical ſovereign no leſs powerful than the civil; and forgetting the ties of blood which connected him with the king, he reſolved to vindicate the clerical privileges, which, he pretended, were here openly
30th Aug. violated. He aſſembled a ſynod at Weſtminſter, and there complained of the impiety of Stephen's meaſures, who had employed violence againſt the dignitaries of the church, and had not awaited the ſentence of a ſpiritual court, by which alone, he affirmed, they could lawfully be tried and condemned, if their conduct had any wiſe merited cenſure or puniſhment [u]. The ſynod ventured to

[s] Gul. Neubr. p. 362. [t] Chron. Sax. p. 238. W. Malmeſ. p. 181. [u] W. Malm. p. 182.

ſend

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send a summons to the king, charging him to appear before them, and to justify his measures [w]; and Stephen, instead of resenting this indignity, sent Aubrey de Vere to plead his cause before that assembly. De Vere accused the two prelates of treason and sedition; but the synod refused to try the cause, or examine their conduct, till those castles, of which they had been dispossessed, were previously restored to them [x]. The bishop of Salisbury declared, that he would appeal to the pope; and had not Stephen and his partizans employed menaces, and even shown a disposition of executing violence by the hands of the soldiery, affairs had instantly come to extremity between the crown and the mitre [y].

While this quarrel, joined to so many other grievances, encreased the discontents among the people, the Empress, invited by the opportunity, and secretly encouraged by the legate himself, landed in England, with Robert earl of Gloucester, and a retinue of an hundred and forty knights. She fixed her residence at Arundel castle, whose gates were opened to her by Adelais, the queen-dowager, now married to William de Albini, earl of Suffex; and she excited by messengers her partizans to take arms in every county of England. Adelais, who had expected that her daughter-in-law would have invaded the kingdom with a much greater force, became apprehensive of danger; and Matilda, to ease her of her fears, removed first to Bristol, which belonged to her brother Robert, thence to Gloucester, where she remained under the protection of Milo, a gallant nobleman in those parts, who had embraced her cause. Soon after, Geoffrey Talbot, William Mohun, Ralph Lovel, William Fitz-John, William Fitz-Alan, Paganell, and many other barons, declared for her; and her party, which

22d Sept. Insurrection in favour of Matilda.

[w] W. Malm. p. 182. M. Paris, p. 53.
[x] W. Malm. p. 183.
[y] Ibid.

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was generally favoured in the kingdom, seemed every day to gain ground upon that of her antagonist.

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Were we to relate all the military events transmitted to us by contemporary and authentic historians, it would be easy to swell our accounts of this reign into a large volume: But those incidents, so little memorable in themselves, and so confused both in time and place, could afford neither instruction nor entertainment to the reader. It suffices to say, that the war was spread into every quarter; and that those turbulent barons, who had already shaken off, in a great measure, the restraint of government, having now obtained the pretence of a public cause, carried on their devastations with redoubled fury, exercised implacable vengeance on each other, and set no bounds to their oppressions over the people. The castles of the nobility were become receptacles of licensed robbers, who, sallying forth day and night, committed spoil on the open country, on the villages, and even on the cities; put the captives to torture, in order to make them reveal their treasures; sold their persons to slavery; and set fire to their houses, after they had pillaged them of every thing valuable. The fierceness of their disposition, leading them to commit wanton destruction, frustrated their rapacity of its purpose; and the property and persons even of the ecclesiastics, generally so much revered, were at last, from necessity, exposed to the same outrage, which had laid waste the rest of the kingdom. The land was left untilled; the instruments of husbandry were destroyed or abandoned; and a grievous famine, the natural result of those disorders, affected equally both parties, and reduced the spoilers, as well as the defenceless people, to the most extreme want and indigence [z].

[z] Chron. Sax. p. 238. W. Malmes. p. 185. Gest. Steph. p. 961.

After

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After several fruitless negotiations and treaties of peace, which never interrupted these destructive hostilities, there happened at last an event, which seemed to promise some end of the public calamities. Ralph, earl of Chester, and his half brother, William de Roumara, partizans of Matilda, had surprized the castle of Lincoln; but the citizens, who were better affected to Stephen, having invited him to their aid, that prince laid close siege to the castle, in hopes of soon rendering himself master of the place, either by assault or famine. The earl of Gloucester hastened with an army to the relief of his friends; and Stephen, informed of his approach, marched into the field with a resolution of giving him battle. After a violent shock, the two wings of the royalists were put to flight; and Stephen himself, surrounded by the enemy, was at last, after exerting great efforts of valour, borne down by numbers, and taken prisoner. He was conducted to Gloucester; and though at first treated with humanity, was soon after, on some suspicion, thrown into prison, and loaded with irons.

1140.

1141. 2d Feb.

Stephen taken prisoner.

Stephen's party was entirely broken by the captivity of their leader, and the barons came in daily from all quarters, and did homage to Matilda. That princess, however, amidst all her prosperity, knew, that she was not secure of success, unless she could gain the confidence of the clergy; and as the conduct of the legate had been of late very ambiguous, and showed his intentions to have rather aimed at humbling his brother, than totally ruining him, she employed every endeavour to fix him in her interests. She held a conference with him in an open plain near Winchester; where she promised upon oath, that, if he would acknowledge her for sovereign, would recognize her title as the sole descendant of the late king, and would again submit to the allegiance, which he, as well as the rest of the kingdom, had sworn to her, he should

2d March.

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1141. should in return be entire master of the administration, and in particular should, at his pleasure, dispose of all vacant bishoprics and abbies. Earl Robert, her brother, Brian Fitz-Count, Milo of Gloucester, and other great men, became guarantees for her observing these engagements [a]; and the prelate was at last induced to promise her allegiance, but that still burdened with the express condition, that she should on her part fulfil her promises. He then conducted her to Winchester, led her in procession to the cathedral, and with great solemnity, in the presence of many bishops and abbots, denounced curses against all those who cursed her, poured out blessings on those who blessed her, granted absolution to such as were obedient to her, and excommunicated such as were rebellious [b]. Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, soon after came also to court, and swore allegiance to the empress [c].

Matilda crowned.

MATILDA, that she might farther ensure the attachment of the clergy, was willing to receive the crown from their hands; and instead of assembling the states of the kingdom, the measure which the constitution, had it been either fixed or regarded, seemed necessarily to require, she was content, that the legate should summon an ecclesiastical synod, and that her title to the throne should there be recognized and acknowledged. The legate, addressing himself to the assembly, told them, that, in the absence of the empress, Stephen, his brother, had been permitted to reign, and, previously to his ascending the throne, had seduced them by many fair promises, of honouring and exalting the church, of maintaining the laws, and of reforming all abuses: That it grieved him to observe how much that prince had in every particular been wanting to his engagements; public peace was in-

[a] W. Malm. p. 187. [b] Chron. Sax. p. 242. Contin. Flor. Wig. p. 676. [c] W. Malmes. p. 187.

terrupted, crimes were daily committed with impunity, bishops were thrown into prison and forced to surrender their possessions, abbies were put to sale, churches were pillaged, and the most enormous disorders prevailed in the administration: That he himself, in order to procure a redress of these grievances, had formerly summoned the king before a council of bishops; but instead of inducing him to amend his conduct, had rather offended him by that expedient: That, how much soever misguided, that prince was still his brother, and the object of his affections; but his interests, however, must be regarded as subordinate to those of their heavenly father, who had now rejected him, and thrown him into the hands of his enemies: That it principally belonged to the clergy to elect and ordain kings; he had summoned them together for that purpose; and having invoked the divine assistance, he now pronounced Matilda, the only descendant of Henry, their late sovereign, queen of England. The whole assembly, by their acclamations or silence, gave, or seemed to give, their assent to this declaration [d].

CHAP. VII. 1141.

The only laymen summoned to this council, which decided the fate of the crown, were the Londoners; and even these were required, not to give their opinion, but to submit to the decrees of the synod. The deputies of London, however, were not so passive: They insisted, that their king should be delivered from prison; but were told by the legate, that it became not the Londoners, who were regarded as noblemen in England, to take part with those barons, who had basely forsaken their lord in battle, and who had treated holy church with contumely [e]. It is with reason that the citizens of London assumed so much authority, if it be true, what is related by Fitz-

[d] W. Malmes. p. 188. This author, a judicious man, was present, and says, that he was very attentive to what passed. This speech, therefore, may be regarded as entirely genuine.

[e] W. Malmes. p. 188.

Stephen,

CHAP. VII. 1141.

Stephens, a contemporary author, that that city could at this time bring into the field no leſs than 80,000 combatants [f].

LONDON, notwithſtanding its great power, and its attachment to Stephen, was at loſt obliged to ſubmit to Matilda; and her authority, by the prudent conduct of earl Robert, ſeemed to be eſtabliſhed over the whole kingdom: But affairs remained not long in this ſituation. That princeſs, beſides the diſadvantages of her ſex, which weakened her influence over a turbulent and martial people, was of a paſſionate, imperious ſpirit, and knew not how to temper with affability the harſhneſs of a refuſal. Stephen's queen, ſeconded by many of the nobility, petitioned for the liberty of her huſband; and offered, that, on this condition, he ſhould renounce the crown, and retire into a convent. The legate deſired, that prince Euſtace, his nephew, might inherit Boulogne and the other patrimonial eſtates of his father [g]: The Londoners applied for the eſtabliſhment of king Edward's laws, inſtead of thoſe of king Henry, which, they ſaid, were grievous and oppreſſive [h]. All theſe petitions were rejected in the moſt haughty and peremptory manner.

THE legate, who had probably never been ſincere in his compliance with Matilda's government, availed himſelf of the ill-humour excited by this imperious conduct, and ſecretly inſtigated the Londoners to a revolt. A con-

[f] P. 4. Were this account to be depended on, London muſt at that time have contained near 400,000 inhabitants, which is above double the number it contained at the death of queen Elizabeth. But theſe looſe calculations, or rather gueſſes, deſerve very little credit. Peter of Blois, a contemporary writer, and a man of ſenſe, ſays there were then only forty thouſand inhabitants in London, which is much more likely. See Epiſt. 151. What Fitz-Stephen ſays of the prodigious riches, ſplendor and commerce of London, proves only the great poverty of the other towns of the kingdom, and indeed of all the northern parts of Europe.

[g] Brompton, p. 1031. [h] Contin. Flor. Wig. p. 677. Gervaſe, p. 1355.

ſpiracy

ſpiracy was entered into to ſeize the perſon of the empreſs; and ſhe ſaved herſelf from the danger by a precipitate retreat. She fled to Oxford: Soon after ſhe went to Wincheſter; whither the legate, deſirous to ſave appearances, and watching the proper opportunity to ruin her cauſe, had retired. But having aſſembled all his retainers, he openly joined his force to that of the Londoners, and to Stephen's mercenary troops, who had not yet evacuated the kingdom; and he beſieged Matilda in Wincheſter. That princeſs, being hard preſſed by famine, made her eſcape; but in the flight, earl Robert, her brother, fell into the hands of the enemy. This nobleman, though a ſubject, was as much the life and ſoul of his own party, as Stephen was of the other; and the empreſs, ſenſible of his merit and importance, conſented to exchange the priſoners on equal terms. The civil war was again kindled with greater fury than ever.

1141.

Stephen releaſed.

EARL Robert, finding the ſucceſſes on both ſides nearly balanced, went over to Normandy, which, during Stephen's captivity, had ſubmitted to the earl of Anjou; and he perſuaded Geoffrey to allow his eldeſt ſon, Henry, a young prince of great hopes, to take a journey into England, and appear at the head of his partizans. This expedient, however, produced nothing deciſive. Stephen took Oxford after a long ſiege: He was defeated by earl Robert at Wilton: And the empreſs, though of a maſculine ſpirit, yet being haraſſed with a variety of good and bad fortune, and alarmed with continual dangers to her perſon and family, at laſt retired into Normandy, whither ſhe had ſent her ſon ſome time before. The death of her brother, which happened nearly about the ſame time, would have proved fatal to her intereſts, had not ſome incidents occurred, which checked the courſe of Stephen's proſperity. This prince, finding, that the caſtles

1142.

1143.

1146. Continuation of the civil wars.

CHAP. VII.

castles built by the noblemen of his own party encouraged the spirit of independance, and were little less dangerous than those which remained in the hands of the enemy, endeavoured to extort from them a surrender of those fortresses; and he alienated the affections of many of them by this equitable demand. The artillery also of the church, which his brother had brought over to his side, had, after some interval, joined the other party. Eugenius III. had mounted the papal throne; the bishop of Winchester was bereaved of the legantine commission, which was conferred on Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, the enemy and rival of the former legate. That pontiff also, having summoned a general council at Rheims in Champagne, instead of allowing the church of England, as had been usual, to elect its own deputies, nominated five English bishops to represent that church, and required their presence in the council. Stephen, who, notwithstanding his present difficulties, was jealous of the rights of his crown, refused them permission to attend [i]; and the pope, sensible of his advantage in contending with a prince who reigned by a disputed title, took revenge by laying all Stephen's party under an interdict [k]. The discontents of the royalists at being thrown into this situation, were augmented by a comparison with Matilda's party, who enjoyed all the benefits of the sacred ordinances; and Stephen was at last obliged, by making proper submissions to the see of Rome, to remove the reproach from his party [l].

1146.

1147.

1148. THE weakness of both sides, rather than any decrease of mutual animosity, having produced a tacit cessation of arms in England, many of the nobility, Roger de Moubray, William de Warenne, and others, finding no opportunity to exert their military ardor at home, inlisted

[i] Epist. St. Thom. p. 225.
[k] Chron. W. Thorn. p. 1807.
[l] Epist. St. Thom. p. 226.

themselves

themſelves in a new cruſade, which with ſurpriſing ſuc- CHAP. VII.
ceſs, after all former diſappointments and misfortunes, was now preached by St. Barnard [m]. But an event ſoon after happened, which threatened a revival of hoſtilities in England. Prince Henry, who had reached his ſixteenth year, was deſirous of receiving the honour of knighthood; a ceremony which every gentleman in that age paſſed through before he was admitted to the uſe of arms, and which was even deemed requiſite for the greateſt princes. He propoſed to receive his admiſſion from his great-uncle, David king of Scotland; and for that purpoſe he paſſed through England with a great retinue, and was attended by the moſt conſiderable of his partizans. He ſtaid ſome time with the king of Scotland; made incurſions into England; and by his dexterity and vigour in all manly exerciſes, by his valour in war, and his prudent conduct in every occurrence, he rouzed the hopes of his party, and gave ſymptoms of thoſe great qualities, which he afterwards diſplayed when he mounted the throne of England. Soon after his return to Normandy, he was, by Matilda's conſent, inveſted in that dutchy; and upon the death of his father, Geoffrey, which happened in the ſubſequent year, he took poſſeſſion both of Anjou and Maine, and concluded a marriage, which brought him a great acceſſion of power, and rendered him extremely formidable to his rival. Eleanor, the daughter and heir of William, duke of Guienne, and earl of Poictou, had been married ſixteen years to Lewis VII. king of France, and had attended him in a cruſade, which that monarch conducted againſt the infidels: But having there loſt the affections of her huſband, and even fallen under ſome ſuſpicion of gallantry with a handſome Saracen, Lewis, more delicate than politic, procured a

1148.

1150.

[m] Hagulſt. p. 275, 276.

divorce

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divorce from her, and reſtored her thoſe rich provinces, which by her marriage ſhe had annexed to the crown of France. Young Henry, neither diſcouraged by the inequality of years, nor by the reports of Eleanor's gallantry, made ſucceſsful courtſhip to that princeſs, and, eſpouſing her ſix weeks after her divorce, got poſſeſſion of all her dominions as her dowry. The luſtre which he received from this acquiſition, and the proſpect of his riſing fortune, had ſuch an effect in England, that, when Stephen, deſirous to enſure the crown to his ſon Euſtace, required the archbiſhop of Canterbury to anoint that prince as his ſucceſſor, the primate refuſed compliance, and made his eſcape beyond ſea, to avoid the violence and revenge of Stephen.

1152.

1153. HENRY, informed of theſe diſpoſitions in the people, made an invaſion on England: Having gained ſome advantage over Stephen at Malmeſbury, and having taken that place, he proceeded thence to throw ſuccours into Wallingford, which the king had advanced with a ſuperior army to beſiege. A deciſive action was every day expected; when the great men on both ſides, terrified at the proſpect of farther bloodſhed and confuſion, interpoſed with their good offices, and ſet on foot a negotiation between theſe rival princes. The death of Euſtace, during the courſe of the treaty, facilitated its concluſion: An accommodation was concluded, by which it was agreed, that Stephen ſhould poſſeſs the crown during his lifetime, that juſtice ſhould be adminiſtered in his name, even in the provinces which had ſubmitted to Henry, and that this latter prince ſhould, on Stephen's demiſe, ſucceed to the kingdom, and William, Stephen's ſon, to Boulogne, and his patrimonial eſtate. After all the barons had ſworn to the obſervance of this treaty, and done homage to Henry, as to the heir of the crown, that prince evacuated

Compromiſe between the king and prince Henry.

cuated the kingdom; and the death of Stephen, which happened next year, after a short illness, prevented all those quarrels and jealousies, which were likely to have ensued in so delicate a situation.

Death of the king. 1154. October 25.

England suffered great miseries during the reign of this prince: But his personal character, allowing for the temerity and injustice of his usurpation, appears not liable to any great exception; and he seems to have been well qualified, had he succeeded by a just title, to have promoted the happiness and prosperity of his subjects [n]. He was possessed of industry, activity, and courage, to a great degree; though not endowed with a sound judgment, he was not deficient in abilities; he had the talent of gaining men's affections; and notwithstanding his precarious situation, he never indulged himself in the exercise of any cruelty or revenge [o]. His advancement to the throne procured him neither tranquillity nor happiness; and though the situation of England prevented the neighbouring states from taking any durable advantage of her confusions, her intestine wars and disorders were to the last degree ruinous and destructive. The court of Rome was also permitted, during those disorders, to make farther advances in her usurpations; and appeals to the pope, which had always been strictly prohibited by the English laws, became now common in every ecclesiastical controversy [p].

[n] W. Malmes. p. 180.
[o] M. Paris, p. 51. Hagul. p. 312.
[p] H. Hunt. p. 395.

CHAP. VIII.

HENRY II.

State of Europe——of France——First acts of Henry's government——Disputes between the civil and ecclesiastical powers——Thomas a Becket, archbishop of Canterbury——Quarrel between the king and Becket——Constitutions of Clarendon——Banishment of Becket——Compromise with him——His return from banishment——His murder——Grief——and submission of the king.

CHAP. VIII.

1154. State of Europe.

THE extensive confederacies, by which the European potentates are now at once united and set in opposition to each other, and which, though they are apt to diffuse the least spark of dissention through the whole, are at least attended with this advantage, that they prevent any violent revolutions or conquests in particular states, were totally unknown in ancient ages; and the theory of foreign politics, in each kingdom, formed a speculation much less complicated and involved than at present. Commerce had not yet bound together the most distant nations in so close a chain: Wars, finished in one campaign and often in one battle, were little affected by the movements of remote states: The imperfect communication among the kingdoms, and their ignorance of each other's situation, made it impracticable for a great number of them to combine in one project or effort: And above all, the turbulent spirit and independant situation of the barons or great vassals in each state gave so much occupation to the sovereign, that he was obliged to confine his attention chiefly to his own state and his own system of government, and was more indifferent

different about what passed among his neighbours. Religion alone, not politics, carried abroad the views of princes; while it either fixed their thoughts on the Holy Land, whose conquest and defence was deemed a point of common honour and interest, or engaged them in intrigues with the Roman pontiff, to whom they had yielded the direction of ecclesiastical affairs, and who was every day assuming more authority than they were willing to allow him. CHAP. VIII. 1154.

BEFORE the conquest of England by the duke of Normandy, this island was as much separated from the rest of the world in politics as in situation; and except from the inroads of the Danish pirates, the English, happily confined at home, had neither enemies nor allies on the continent. The foreign dominions of William connected them with the king and great vassals of France; and while the opposite pretensions of the pope and emperor in Italy produced a continual intercourse between Germany and that country, the two great monarchs of France and England formed, in another part of Europe, a separate system, and carried on their wars and negotiations, without meeting either with opposition or support from the others.

State of France.

ON the decline of the Carlovingian race, the nobles, in every province of France, taking advantage of the sovereign's weakness, and obliged to provide, each for his own defence, against the ravages of the Norman freebooters, had assumed, both in civil and military affairs, an authority almost independant, and had reduced, within very narrow limits, the prerogative of their princes. The accession of Hugh Capet, by annexing a great fief to the crown, had brought some addition to the royal dignity; but this fief, though considerable for a subject, appeared a narrow basis of power for a prince who was placed at the head of so great a community. The royal demesnes

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consisted only of Paris, Orleans, Estampes, Compiegne, and a few places, scattered over the northern provinces. In all the rest of the kingdom, the prince's authority was rather nominal than real: The vassals were accustomed, nay intitled to make war, without his permission, on each other: They were even entitled, if they conceived themselves injured, to turn their arms against their sovereign: They exercised all civil jurisdiction, without appeal, over their tenants and inferior vassals: Their common jealousy of the crown easily united them against any attempt on their exorbitant privileges; and as some of them had attained the power and authority of great princes, even the smallest baron was sure of immediate and effectual protection. Besides six ecclesiastical peerages, which, with the other immunities of the church, cramped extremely the general execution of justice; there were six lay peerages, Burgundy, Normandy, Guienne, Flanders, Toulouse, and Champagne, which formed very extensive and puissant sovereignties. And though the combination of all those princes and barons could, on urgent occasions, muster a mighty power: Yet was it very difficult to set that great machine in movement; it was almost impossible to preserve harmony in its parts; a sense of common interest alone could, for a time, unite them under their sovereign against a common enemy; but if the king attempted to turn the force of the community against any mutinous vassal, the same sense of common interest made the others oppose themselves to the success of his pretensions. Lewis the Gross, the last sovereign, marched, at one time, to his frontiers against the Germans at the head of an army of two hundred thousand men; but a petty lord of Corbeil, of Puiset, of Couci, was able, at another period, to set that prince at defiance, and to maintain open war against him.

THE

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THE authority of the Engliſh monarch was much more extenſive within his kingdom, and the diſproportion much greater between him and the moſt powerful of his vaſſals. His demeſnes and revenue were large, compared to the greatneſs of his ſtate: He was accuſtomed to levy arbitrary exactions on his ſubjects: His courts of judicature extended their juriſdiction into every part of the kingdom: He could cruſh by his power, or by a judicial ſentence, well or ill founded, any obnoxious baron: And though the feudal inſtitutions which prevailed in his kingdom, had the ſame tendency, as in other ſtates, to exalt the ariſtocracy, and depreſs the monarchy, it required, in England, according to its preſent conſtitution, a great combination of the vaſſals to oppoſe their ſovereign lord, and there had not hitherto ariſen any baron ſo powerful, as of himſelf to levy war againſt the prince, and afford protection to the inferior barons.

WHILE ſuch were the different ſituations of France and England, and the latter enjoyed ſo many advantages above the former; the acceſſion of Henry II. a prince of great abilities, poſſeſſed of ſo many rich provinces on the continent, might appear an event dangerous, if not fatal, to the French monarchy, and ſufficient to break entirely the balance between the ſtates. He was maſter, in the right of his father, of Anjou, Touraine, and Maine; in that of his mother, of Normandy; in that of his wife, of Guienne, Poictou, Xaintonge, Auvergne, Perigord, Angoumois, the Limouſin. He ſoon after annexed Britanny to his other ſtates, and was already poſſeſſed of the ſuperiority over that province, which, on the firſt ceſſion of Normandy to Rollo the Dane, had been granted by Charles the Simple in vaſſalage to that formidable ravager. Theſe provinces compoſed above a third of the whole French monarchy, and were much ſuperior, in extent and opulence, to thoſe territories, which were ſubjected

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jected to the immediate jurisdiction and government of the king. The vassal was here more powerful than his liege lord: The situation which had enabled Hugh Capet to depose the Carlovingian princes, seemed here to be renewed, and that with much greater advantages on the side of the vassal: And when England was added to so many provinces, the French king had reason to apprehend, from this conjuncture, some great disaster to himself and to his family. But in reality, it was this circumstance, which appeared so formidable, that saved the Capetian race, and, by its consequences, exalted them to that pitch of grandeur, which they at present enjoy.

The limited authority of the prince in the feudal constitutions prevented the king of England from employing with advantage the force of so many states, which were subjected to his government; and these different members, disjoined by situation, and disagreeing in laws, language, and manners, were never thoroughly cemented into one monarchy. He soon became, both from his distant place of residence and from the incompatibility of interests, a kind of foreigner to his French dominions; and his subjects on the continent considered their allegiance as more naturally due to their superior lord, who lived in their neighbourhood, and who was acknowledged to be the supreme head of their nation. He was always at hand to invade them; their immediate lord was often at too great a distance to protect them; and any disorder in any part of his dispersed dominions gave advantages against him. The other powerful vassals of the French crown were rather pleased to see the expulsion of the English, and were not affected with that jealousy, which would have arisen from the oppression of a co-vassal, who was of the same rank with themselves. By this means, the king of France found it more easy to conquer those numerous provinces from England, than to subdue a duke of

Normandy or Guienne, a count of Anjou, Maine, or Poictou. And after reducing ſuch extenſive territories, which immediately incorporated with the body of the monarchy, he found greater facility in uniting to the crown the other great fiefs, which ſtill remained ſeparate and independant. CHAP. VIII. 1154.

But as theſe important conſequences could not be foreſeen by human wiſdom, the king of France remarked with terror the riſing grandeur of the houſe of Anjou or Plantagenet; and in order to retard its progreſs, he had ever maintained a ſtrict union with Stephen, and had endeavoured to ſupport the tottering fortunes of that bold uſurper. But after this prince's death, it was too late to think of oppoſing the ſucceſſion of Henry, or preventing the performance of thoſe ſtipulations, which, with the unanimous conſent of the nation, he had made with his predeceſſor. The Engliſh, haraſſed with civil wars, and diſguſted with the bloodſhed and depredations, which, during the courſe of ſo many years, had attended them, were little diſpoſed to violate their oaths, by excluding the lawful heir from the ſucceſſion of their monarchy [q]. Many of the moſt conſiderable fortreſſes were in the hands of his partizans; the whole nation had had occaſion to ſee the noble qualities with which he was endowed [r], and to compare them with the mean talents of William, the ſon of Stephen; and as they were acquainted with his great power, and were rather pleaſed to ſee the acceſſion of ſo many foreign dominions to the crown of England, they never entertained the leaſt thoughts of reſiſting him. Henry himſelf, ſenſible of the advantages attending his preſent ſituation was in no hurry to arrive in England; and being engaged in the ſiege of a caſtle on the frontiers of Normandy, when he received intelligence of Stephen's death, he made it a point of honour not to depart from his enter-

[q] Matth. Paris, p. 65. [r] Gul. Neubr. p. 381.

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prize, till he had brought it to an iſſue. He then ſet out on his journey, and was received in England with the acclamations of all orders of men, who ſwore with pleaſure the oath of fealty and allegiance to him.

1154. 8th Decem.

1155. First acts of Henry's government.

THE firſt act of Henry's government correſponded to the high idea entertained of his vigour and abilities, and prognoſticated the re-eſtabliſhment of juſtice and tranquillity, of which the kingdom had ſo long been bereaved. He immediately diſmiſſed all thoſe mercenary ſoldiers, who had committed great diſorders in the nation; and he ſent them abroad, together with William of Ypres, their leader, the friend and confident of Stephen [s]. He revoked all the grants made by his predeceſſor [t], even thoſe which neceſſity had extorted from the empreſs Matilda; and that princeſs, who had reſigned her rights in favour of Henry, made no oppoſition to a meaſure ſo neceſſary for ſupporting the dignity of the crown. He repaired the coin, which had been extremely debaſed during his predeceſſor's reign; and he took proper meaſures againſt the return of a like abuſe [u]. He was rigorous in the execution of juſtice, and in the ſuppreſſion of robbery and violence; and that he might reſtore authority to the laws, he cauſed all the new erected caſtles to be demoliſhed, which had proved ſo many ſanctuaries to freebooters and rebels [w]. The earl of Albemarle, Hugh Mortimer, and Roger, the ſon of Milo of Gloceſter, were inclined to make ſome reſiſtance to this ſalutary meaſure; but the approach of the king with his forces ſoon obliged them to ſubmit.

1156.

EVERY thing being reſtored to full tranquillity in England, Henry went abroad in order to oppoſe the attempts

[s] Fitz-Steph. p. 13. M. Paris, p. 65. Neubr. p. 381. Chron. T. Wykes, p. 30. [t] Neubr. p. 382. [u] Hoveden, p. 491.

[w] Hoveden, p. 491. Fitz-Steph. p. 13. M. Paris, p. 65. Neubr. p. 381. Brompton, p. 1043.

of his brother Geoffrey, who, during his abſence, had made an incurſion into Anjou and Maine, had advanced ſome pretenſions to thoſe provinces, and had got poſſeſſion of a conſiderable part of them *. On the king's appearance, the people returned to their allegiance; and Geoffrey, reſigning his claim for an annual penſion of a thouſand pounds, departed and took poſſeſſion of the county of Nantz, which the inhabitants, who had expelled count Hoel, their prince, had put into his hands. Henry returned to England the following year: The incurſions of the Welſh then provoked him to make an invaſion upon them; where the natural faſtneſſes of the country occaſioned him great difficulties, and even brought him into danger. His vanguard, being engaged in a narrow paſs, was put to rout: Henry de Eſſex, the hereditary ſtandard-bearer, ſeized with a panic, threw down the ſtandard, took to flight, and exclaimed that the king was ſlain: And had not that prince immediately appeared in perſon, and led on his troops with great gallantry, the conſequences might have proved fatal to the whole army [x]. For this miſbehaviour, Eſſex was afterwards accuſed of felony by Robert de Montfort; was vanquiſhed in ſingle combat; his eſtate was confiſcated; and he himſelf was thruſt into a convent [y]. The ſubmiſſions of the Welſh procured them an accommodation with England. CHAP. VIII. 1157.

THE martial diſpoſition of the princes in that age engaged them to head their own armies in every enterprize, even the moſt frivolous; and their feeble authority made it commonly impracticable for them to delegate, on occaſion, the command to their generals. Geoffrey, the king's brother, died ſoon after he had acquired poſſeſſion of Nantz: Though he had no other title to that county, 1158.

* See note [O] at the end of the volume.

[x] Newbr. p. 383. Chron. W. Heming. p. 492.

[y] M. Paris, p. 70. Newbr. p. 383.

than

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than the voluntary submission or election of the inhabitants two years before, Henry laid claim to the territory as devolved to him by hereditary right, and he went over to support his pretensions by force of arms. Conan, duke or earl of Britanny (for these titles are given indifferently by historians to those princes) pretended that Nantz had been lately separated by rebellion from his principality, to which of right it belonged; and immediately on Geoffrey's death, he took possession of the disputed territory. Lest Lewis, the French king, should interpose in the controversy, Henry paid him a visit; and so allured him by caresses and civilities, that an alliance was contracted between them; and they agreed, that young Henry, heir to the English monarchy, should be affianced to Margaret of France, though the former was only five years of age, and the latter was still in her cradle. Henry, now secure of meeting with no interruption on this side, advanced with his army into Britanny; and Conan, in despair of being able to make resistance, delivered up the county of Nantz to him. The ability of the king procured him farther and more important advantages from this incident. Conan, harassed with the turbulent disposition of his subjects, was desirous of procuring to himself the support of so great a monarch; and he betrothed his daughter and only child, yet an infant, to Geoffrey, the king's third son, who was of the same tender years. The duke of Britanny died about seven years after; and Henry, on pretence of being guardian to his son and daughter-in-law, put himself in possession of that principality, and annexed it to his other great dominions.

1158.

1159. THE king had a prospect of making still farther acquisitions; and the activity of his temper suffered no opportunity of that kind to escape him. Philippa, dutchess of Guienne,

Guienne, mother of Queen Eleanor, was the only iſſue of William IV. count of Toulouſe; and would have inherited his dominions, had not that prince, deſirous of preſerving the ſucceſſion in the male-line, conveyed the principality to his brother, Raymond de St. Gilles, by a contract of ſale which was in that age regarded as fictitious and illuſory. By this means the title to the county of Toulouſe came to be diſputed between the male and female heirs; and the one or the other, as opportunities favoured them, had obtained poſſeſſion. Raymond, grandſon of Raymond de St. Gilles, was the reigning ſovereign; and on Henry's reviving his wife's claim, this prince had recourſe for protection to the king of France, who was ſo much concerned in policy to prevent the farther aggrandizement of the Engliſh monarch. Lewis himſelf, when married to Eleanor, had aſſerted the juſtice of her claim, and had demanded poſſeſſion of Toulouſe [z]; but his ſentiments changing with his intereſt, he now determined to defend, by his power and authority, the title of Raymond. Henry found, that it would be requiſite to ſupport his pretenſions againſt potent antagoniſts; and that nothing but a formidable army could maintain a claim, which he had in vain aſſerted by arguments and manifeſtos.

CHAP. VIII. 1159.

An army, compoſed of feudal vaſſals, was commonly very intractable and undiſciplined, both becauſe of the independant ſpirit of the perſons who ſerved in it, and becauſe the commands were not given either by the choice of the ſovereign or from the military capacity and experience of the officers. Each baron conducted his own vaſſals: His rank was greater or leſs, proportioned to the extent of his property: Even the ſupreme command under the prince was often attached to birth: And as the military vaſſals were obliged to ſerve only forty days

[z] Neubr. p. 387. Chron. W. Heming. p. 494.

at

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1159. at their own charge; though, if the expedition was distant, they were put to great expence; the prince reaped little benefit from their attendance. Henry, sensible of these inconveniencies, levied upon his vassals in Normandy and other provinces, which were remote from Toulouse, a sum of money in lieu of their service; and this commutation, by reason of the great distance, was still more advantageous to his English vassals. He imposed, therefore, a scutage of 180,000 pounds on the knight's fees, a commutation, to which, though it was unusual, and the first perhaps to be met with in history *, the military tenants willingly submitted; and with this money, he levied an army which was more under his command, and whose service was more durable and constant. Assisted by Berenger, count of Barcelona, and Trincaval, count of Nismes, whom he had gained to his party, he invaded the county of Toulouse; and after taking Verdun, Castlenau, and other places, he besieged the capital of the province, and was likely to prevail in the enterprize; when Lewis, advancing before the arrival of his main body, threw himself into the place with a small reinforcement. Henry was urged by some of his ministers to prosecute the siege, to take Lewis prisoner, and to impose his own terms in the pacification; but he either thought it so much his interest to maintain the feudal principles, by which his foreign dominions were secured, or bore so much respect to his superior lord, that he declared he would not attack a place defended by him in person; and he immediately raised the siege [a]. He marched into Normandy to protect that province against an incursion which the count of Dreux, instigated by king Lewis, his brother, had made upon it. War was now openly carried on between the two monarchs, but

[a] Madox, p. 435. Gervase, p. 1381. See note [P] at the end of the volume. [a] Fitz Steph. p. 22. Diceto, p. 531.

produced

produced no memorable event: It ſoon ended in a ceſ- CHAP. VIII.
ſation of arms, and that followed by a peace, which was not, however, attended with any confidence or good correſpondence between thoſe rival princes. The fortreſs 1160.
of Giſors, being part of the dowry ſtipulated to Margaret of France, had been conſigned by agreement to the knights templars, on condition that it ſhould be delivered into Henry's hands, after the celebration of the nuptials. The king, that he might have a pretence for immediately demanding the place, ordered the marriage to be ſolemnized between the prince and princeſs, though both infants [b]; and he engaged the grand-maſter of the templars, by large preſents, as was generally ſuſpected, to put him in poſſeſſion of Giſors [c]. Lewis reſenting this fraudulent conduct, baniſhed the templars from France, 1161.
and would have made war upon the king of England, had it not been for the mediation and authority of pope Alexander III. who had been chaced from Rome by the antipope, Victor IV. and reſided at that time in France. That we may form an idea of the authority poſſeſſed by the Roman pontiff during thoſe ages, it may be proper to obſerve, that the two kings had, the year before, met the pope at the caſtle of Torci on the Loir; and they gave him ſuch marks of reſpect, that both diſmounted to receive him, and holding each of them one of the reins of his bridle, walked on foot by his ſide, and conducted him in that ſubmiſſive manner into the caſtle [d]. *A ſpectacle*, cries Baronius in an ecſtacy, *to God, angels, and men; and ſuch as had never before been exhibited to the world!*

[b] Hoveden, p. 492. Neubr. p. 400. Dicето, p. 532. Brompton, p 1450.

[c] Since the firſt publication of this hiſtory, Lord Lyttelton has publiſhed a copy of the treaty between Henry and Lewis, by which it appears, if there were no ſecret article, that Henry was not guilty of any fraud in this tranſaction.

[d] Trivet, p 43.

HENRY,

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1162.

HENRY, soon after he had accommodated his differences with Lewis by the pope's mediation, returned to England; where he commenced an enterprize, which, though required by sound policy, and even conducted in the main with prudence, bred him great disquietude, involved him in danger, and was not concluded without some loss and dishonour.

Disputes between the civil and ecclesiastical powers.

THE usurpations of the clergy, which had at first been gradual, were now become so rapid, and had mounted to such a height, that the contest between the regale and pontificale was really arrived at a crisis in England; and it became necessary to determine whether the king or the priests, particularly the archbishop of Canterbury, should be sovereign of the kingdom [c]. The aspiring spirit of Henry, which gave inquietude to all his neighbours, was not likely long to pay a tame submission to the encroachments of subjects; and as nothing opens men's eyes so readily as their interest, he was in no danger of falling, in this respect, into that abject superstition, which retained his people in subjection. From the commencement of his reign, in the government of his foreign dominions, as well as of England, he had shown a fixed purpose to repress clerical usurpations, and to maintain those prerogatives, which had been transmitted to him by his predecessors. During the schism of the papacy between Alexander and Victor, he had determined, for some time, to remain neuter: When informed, that the archbishop of Roüen and the bishop of Mans had, from their own authority, acknowledged Alexander as legitimate pope, he was so enraged, that, though he spared the archbishop on account of his great age, he immediately issued orders for overthrowing the houses of the bishop of Mans, and archdeacon of Roüen *; and it was not till he had deli-

[c] Fitz-Stephen, p. 27.

* See note [Q] at the end of the volume.

berately

berately examined the matter, by thoſe views, which uſually enter into the councils of princes, that he allowed that pontiff to exerciſe authority over any of his dominions. In England, the mild character and advanced years of Theobald, archbiſhop of Canterbury, together with his merits in refuſing to put the crown on the head of Euſtace, ſon of Stephen, prevented Henry, during the life-time of that primate, from taking any meaſures againſt the multiplied encroachments of the clergy: But after his death, the king reſolved to exert himſelf with more activity; and that he might be ſecure againſt any oppoſition, he advanced to that dignity Becket, his chancellor, on whoſe compliance, he thought, he could entirely depend. 1162.

June 3. Thomas a Becket, archbiſhop of Canterbury.

THOMAS A BECKET, the firſt man of Engliſh deſcent, who, ſince the Norman conqueſt, had, during the courſe of a whole century, riſen to any conſiderable ſtation, was born of reputable parents in the city of London; and being endowed both with induſtry and capacity, he early inſinuated himſelf into the favour of archbiſhop Theobald, and obtained from that prelate ſome preferments and offices. By their means, he was enabled to travel for farther improvement to Italy, where he ſtudied the civil and canon law at Bologna; and on his return, he appeared to have made ſuch proficiency in knowledge, that he was promoted by his patron to the archdeaconry of Canterbury, an office of conſiderable truſt and profit. He was afterwards employed with ſucceſs by Theobald in tranſacting buſineſs at Rome; and on Henry's acceſſion, he was recommended to that monarch as worthy of farther preferment. Henry, who knew that Becket had been inſtrumental in ſupporting that reſolution of the archbiſhop, which had tended ſo much to facilitate his own advancement to the throne, was already prepoſſeſſed in his favour; and finding, on farther acquaintance, that his ſpirit and abilities entitled him to any

CHAP. VIII. 1162.

any truſt, he ſoon promoted him to the dignity of chancellor, one of the firſt civil offices in the kingdom. The chancellor, in that age, beſides the cuſtody of the great ſeal, had poſſeſſion of all vacant prelacies and abbies; he was the guardian of all ſuch minors and pupils as were the king's tenants; all baronies which eſcheated to the crown were under his adminiſtration; he was entitled to a place in council, even though he was not particularly ſummoned; and as he exerciſed alſo the office of ſecretary of ſtate, and it belonged to him to counterſign all commiſſions, writs, and letters-patent, he was a kind of prime miniſter, and was concerned in the diſpatch of every buſineſs of importance [f]. Beſides exerciſing this high office, Becket, by the favour of the king or archbiſhop, was made provoſt of Beverley, dean of Haſtings, and conſtable of the tower: He was put in poſſeſſion of the honours of Eye and Berkham, large baronies that had eſcheated to the crown: And to complete his grandeur, he was entruſted with the education of Prince Henry, the king's eldeſt ſon, and heir of the monarchy [g]. The pomp of his retinue, the ſumptuouſneſs of his furniture, the luxury of his table, the munificence of his preſents, correſponded to theſe great preferments; or rather exceeded any thing that England had ever before ſeen in any ſubject. His hiſtorian and ſecretary, Fitz-Stephens [h], mentions, among other particulars, that his apartments were every day in winter covered with clean ſtraw or hay, and in ſummer with green ruſhes or boughs; leſt the gentlemen, who paid court to him, and who could not, by reaſon of their great number, find a place at table, ſhould ſoil their fine cloaths by ſitting on a dirty floor [i]. A great number of knights were retained in his ſervice;

[f] Fitz Steph. p. 13. [g] Ibid. p. 15. Hiſt. Quad. p. 9, 14. [h] p. 15.

[i] John Baldwin held the manor of Oterarſfee in Ayleſbury of the king in ſoccage, by the ſervice of finding litter for the king's bed, viz. in ſummer, graſs

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service; the greatest barons were proud of being received at his table; his house was a place of education for the sons of the chief nobility; and the king himself frequently vouchsafed to partake of his entertainments. As his way of life was splendid and opulent, his amusements and occupations were gay, and partook of the cavalier spirit, which, as he had only taken deacon's orders, he did not think unbefitting his character. He employed himself at leisure hours in hunting, hawking, gaming, and horsemanship; he exposed his person in several military actions [k]; he carried over, at his own charge, seven hundred knights to attend the king in his wars at Toulouse; in the subsequent wars on the frontiers of Normandy, he maintained, during forty days, twelve hundred knights, and four thousand of their train [l]; and in an embassy to France, with which he was entrusted, he astonished that court with the number and magnificence of his retinue.

HENRY, besides committing all his more important business to Becket's management, honoured him with his friendship and intimacy; and whenever he was disposed to relax himself by sports of any kind, he admitted his chancellor to the party [m]. An instance of their familiarity is mentioned by Fitz-Stephens, which, as it shows the manners of the age, it may not be improper to relate. One day, as the king and the chancellor were riding together in the streets of London, they observed a beggar, who was shivering with cold. Would it not be very praise-worthy, said the king, to give that poor man a warm coat in this severe season? It would, surely, replied the chancellor; and you do well, Sir, in thinking

grass or herbs, and two grey geese, and in winter, straw and three eels, thrice in the year, if the king should come thrice in the year to Aylesbury. Madox, Bar. Anglica, p. 247.

[k] Fitz-Steph. p. 23. Hist. Quad. p. 9. [l] Fitz-Steph. p. 19, 20, 22, 23. [m] Ibid. p. 16. Hist. Quad. p. 8.

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of such good actions. Then he shall have one presently, cried the king: And seizing the skirt of the chancellor's coat, which was scarlet, and lined with ermine, began to pull it violently. The chancellor defended himself for some time; and they had both of them like to have tumbled off their horses in the street, when Becket, after a vehement struggle, let go his coat; which the king bestowed on the beggar, who, being ignorant of the quality of the persons, was not a little surprised at the present [n].

BECKET, who, by his complaisance and good-humour, had rendered himself agreeable, and by his industry and abilities useful, to his master, appeared to him the fittest person for supplying the vacancy made by the death of Theobald. As he was well acquainted with the king's intentions [o] of retrenching, or rather confining within the ancient bounds, all ecclesiastical privileges, and always showed a ready disposition to comply with them [p], Henry, who never expected any resistance from that quarter, immediately issued orders for electing him archbishop of Canterbury. But this resolution, which was taken contrary to the opinion of Matilda, and many of the ministers [q], drew after it very unhappy consequences; and never prince of so great penetration, appeared, in the issue, to have so little understood the genius and character of his minister.

No sooner was Becket installed in this high dignity, which rendered him for life the second person in the kingdom, with some pretensions of aspiring to be the first, than he totally altered his demeanor and conduct, and endeavoured to acquire the character of sanctity, of which his former busy and ostentatious course of life might, in the eyes of the people, have naturally bereaved him. Without consulting the king, he immediately returned

[n] Fitz Steph. p. 16. Epist. St. Thom. p. 232.
[o] Ibid. p. 17.
[p] Ibid. p. 23.
[q] Epist. St. Thom. p. 167.

into

into his hands the commiſſion of chancellor; pretending, that he muſt thenceforth detach himſelf from ſecular affairs, and be ſolely employed in the exerciſe of his ſpiritual function; but in reality, that he might break off all connexions with Henry, and appriſe him, that Becket, as primate of England, was now become entirely a new perſonage. He maintained, in his retinue and attendants alone, his ancient pomp and luſtre, which was uſeful to ſtrike the vulgar: In his own perſon he affected the greateſt auſterity, and moſt rigid mortification, which, he was ſenſible, would have an equal or a greater tendency to the ſame end. He wore ſack-cloth next his ſkin, which, by his affected care to conceal it, was neceſſarily the more remarked by all the world: He changed it ſo ſeldom, that it was filled with dirt and vermin: His uſual diet was bread; his drink water, which he even rendered farther unpalatable by the mixture of unſavoury herbs: He tore his back with the frequent diſcipline which he inflicted on it: He daily on his knees waſhed, in imitation of Chriſt, the feet of thirteen beggars, whom he afterwards diſmiſſed with preſents[r]: He gained the affections of the monks by his frequent charities to the convents and hoſpitals: Every one, who made profeſſion of ſanctity, was admitted to his converſation, and returned full of panegyrics on the humility, as well as on the piety and mortification, of the holy primate: He ſeemed to be perpetually employed in reciting prayers and pious lectures, or in peruſing religious diſcourſes: His aſpect wore the appearance of ſerioufneſs, and mental recollection, and ſecret devotion: And all men of penetration plainly ſaw, that he was meditating ſome great deſign, and that the ambition and oſtentation of his character had turned itſelf towards a new and more dangerous object.

CHAP. VIII. 1162.

[r] Fitz-Steph. p. 25. Hiſt. Quad. p. 19.

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1163. Quarrel between the king and Becket.

BECKET waited not till Henry ſhould commence thoſe projects againſt the eccleſiaſtical power, which, he knew, had been formed by that prince: He was himſelf the aggreſſor; and endeavoured to overawe the king by the intrepidity and boldneſs of his enterprizes. He ſummoned the earl of Clare to ſurrender the barony of Tunbridge, which, ever ſince the conqueſt, had remained in the family of that nobleman, but which, as it had formerly belonged to the ſee of Canterbury, Becket pretended his predeceſſors were prohibited by the canons to alienate. The earl of Clare, beſides the luſtre which he derived from the greatneſs of his own birth, and the extent of his poſſeſſions, was allied to all the principal families in the kingdom; his ſiſter, who was a celebrated beauty, had farther extended his credit among the nobility, and was even ſuppoſed to have gained the king's affections; and Becket could not better diſcover, than by attacking ſo powerful an intereſt, his reſolution of maintaining with vigour the rights, real or pretended, of his ſee [s].

WILLIAM de Eynsford, a military tenant of the crown, was patron of a living, which belonged to a manor that held of the archbiſhop of Canterbury; but Becket, without regard to William's right, preſented, on a new and illegal pretext, one Laurence to that living, who was violently expelled by Eynsford. The primate, making himſelf, as was uſual in ſpiritual courts, both judge and party, iſſued out, in a ſummary manner, the ſentence of excommunication againſt Eynsford, who complained to the king, that he, who held *in capite* of the crown, ſhould, contrary to the practice eſtabliſhed by the Conqueror, and maintained ever ſince by his ſucceſſors, be ſubjected to that terrible ſentence, without the previous conſent of the ſovereign [t]. Henry, who had

[s] Fitz-Steph. p. 28. Gervaſe, p. 1374. Diceto, p. 536.

[t] M. Paris, p. 7.

now

now broken off all personal intercourse with Becket, sent him, by a messenger, his orders to absolve Eynsford; but received for answer, that it belonged not to the king to inform him whom he should absolve and whom excommunicate [u]: And it was not till after many remonstrances and menaces, that Becket, though with the worst grace imaginable, was induced to comply with the royal mandate. CHAP. VIII. 1163.

HENRY, though he found himself thus grievously mistaken in the character of the person whom he had promoted to the primacy, determined not to desist from his former intention of retrenching clerical usurpations. He was entirely master of his extensive dominions: The prudence and vigour of his administration, attended with perpetual success, had raised his character above that of any of his predecessors [w]: The papacy seemed to be weakened by a schism, which divided all Europe: And he rightly judged, that, if the present favourable opportunity were neglected, the crown must, from the prevalent superstition of the people, be in danger of falling into an entire subordination under the mitre.

THE union of the civil and ecclesiastical powers serves extremely, in every civilized government, to the maintenance of peace and order; and prevents those mutual incroachments, which, as there can be no ultimate judge between them, are often attended with the most dangerous consequences. Whether the supreme magistrate, who unites these powers, receives the appellation of prince or prelate, it is not material: The superior weight, which temporal interests commonly bear in the apprehensions of men above spiritual, renders the civil part of his character most prevalent; and in time prevents those gross impostures and bigotted persecutions, which, in all false religions, are the chief foundation of clerical authority. But during the progress of ecclesiastical usurpations, the

[u] Fitz-Steph. p. 28. [w] Epist. St. Thom. p. 130.

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ſtate, by the reſiſtance of the civil magiſtrate, is naturally thrown into convulſions; and it behoves the prince, both for his own intereſt, and for that of the public, to provide, in time, ſufficient barriers againſt ſo dangerous and inſidious a rival. This precaution had hitherto been much neglected in England, as well as in other catholic countries; and affairs at laſt ſeemed to have come to a dangerous criſis: A ſovereign of the greateſt abilities was now on the throne: A prelate of the moſt inflexible and intrepid character was poſſeſſed of the primacy: The contending powers appeared to be armed with their full force, and it was natural to expect ſome extraordinary event to reſult from their conflict.

AMONG their other inventions to obtain money, the clergy had inculcated the neceſſity of penance as an atonement for ſin; and having again introduced the practice of paying them large ſums as a commutation, or ſpecies of atonement, for the remiſſion of thoſe penances, the ſins of the people, by theſe means, had become a revenue to the prieſts; and the king computed, that, by this invention alone, they levied more money upon his ſubjects, than flowed, by all the funds and taxes, into the royal exchequer [x]. That he might eaſe the people of ſo heavy and arbitrary an impoſition, Henry required, that a civil officer of his appointment ſhould be preſent in all eccleſiaſtical courts, and ſhould, for the future, give his conſent to every compoſition which was made with ſinners for their ſpiritual offences.

THE eccleſiaſtics, in that age, had renounced all immediate ſubordination to the magiſtrate: They openly pretended to an exemption, in criminal accuſations, from a trial before courts of juſtice; and were gradually introducing a like exemption in civil cauſes: Spiritual penalties alone could be inflicted on their offences: And as the clergy had extremely multiplied in England, and

[x] Fitz-Steph. p. 32.

many

many of them were consequently of very low characters, crimes of the deepest dye, murders, robberies, adulteries, rapes, were daily committed with impunity by the ecclesiastics. It had been found, for instance, on enquiry, that no less than a hundred murders had, since the king's accession, been perpetrated by men of that profession, who had never been called to account for these offences [y]; and holy orders were become a full protection for all enormities. A clerk in Worcestershire, having debauched a gentleman's daughter, had, at this time, proceeded to murder the father; and the general indignation against this crime moved the king to attempt the remedy of an abuse which was become so palpable, and to require that the clerk should be delivered up, and receive condign punishment from the magistrate [z]. Becket insisted on the privileges of the church; confined the criminal in the bishop's prison, lest he should be seized by the king's officers; maintained that no greater punishment could be inflicted on him than degradation: And when the king demanded, that, immediately after he was degraded, he should be tried by the civil power, the primate asserted, that it was iniquitous to try a man twice upon the same accusation, and for the same offence [a].

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HENRY, laying hold of so favourable an occasion, resolved to push the clergy with regard to all their privileges, which they had raised to an enormous height, and to determine at once those controversies, which daily multiplied, between the civil and the ecclesiastical jurisdictions. He summoned an assembly of all the prelates of England; and he put to them this concise and decisive question, Whether or not they were willing to submit to the ancient laws and customs of the kingdom? The bishops

y. Neubr. p. 394. z Fitz-Steph. p. 33. Hist. Quad. p. 52.

a Fitz-Steph. p. 29. Hist. Quad. p. 33, 45. Hoveden, p. 492. M. Paris, p. 72. Dicето, p. 536, 537. Brompton, p. 1058. Gervase, p. 1384. Epist. St. Thom. p. 208, 209.

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unanimouſly replied, that they were willing, *ſaving their own order* [b]: A device, by which they thought to elude the preſent urgency of the king's demand, and yet reſerve to themſelves, on a favourable opportunity, the power of reſuming all their pretenſions. The king was ſenſible of the artifice, and was provoked to the higheſt indignation. He left the aſſembly, with viſible marks of his diſpleaſure: He required the primate inſtantly to ſurrender the honours and caſtles of Eye and Berkham: The biſhops were terrified, and expected ſtill farther effects of his reſentment. Becket alone was inflexible; and nothing but the interpoſition of the pope's legate and almoner, Philip, who dreaded a breach with ſo powerful a prince at ſo unſeaſonable a juncture, could have prevailed on him to retract the ſaving clauſe, and give a general and abſolute promiſe of obſerving the ancient cuſtoms [c].

But Henry was not content with a declaration in theſe general terms: He reſolved, ere it was too late, to define expreſly thoſe cuſtoms, with which he required compliance, and to put a ſtop to clerical uſurpations, before they were fully conſolidated, and could plead antiquity, as they already did a ſacred authority, in their favour. The claims of the church were open and viſible. After a gradual and inſenſible progreſs during many centuries, the maſk had at laſt been taken off, and ſeveral eccleſiaſtical councils, by their canons, which were pretended to be irrevocable and infallible, had poſitively defined thoſe privileges and immunities, which gave ſuch general offence, and appeared ſo dangerous to the civil magiſtrate. Henry therefore deemed it neceſſary to define with the ſame preciſion the limits of the civil power; to oppoſe his legal cuſtoms to their divine ordinances; to

[b] Fitz Steph. p. 31. Hiſt. Quad. p. 34. Hoveden, p. 492.
[c] Hiſt. Quadr. p. 37. Hoveden, p. 493. Gervaſe, p. 1387.

determine

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determine the exact boundaries of the rival jurisdictions; and for this purpose, he summoned a general council of the nobility and prelates at Clarendon, to whom he submitted this great and important question. 1164. 25th Jan.

Constitutions of Clarendon.

THE barons were all gained to the king's party, either by the reasons which he urged, or by his superior authority: The bishops were overawed by the general combination against them: And the following laws, commonly called the *Constitutions of Clarendon*, were voted without opposition by this assembly [d]. It was enacted, that all suits concerning the advowson and presentation of churches should be determined in the civil courts: That the churches, belonging to the king's fee, should not be granted in perpetuity without his consent: That clerks, accused of any crime, should be tried in the civil courts: That no person, particularly no clergyman of any rank, should depart the kingdom without the king's licence: That excommunicated persons should not be bound to give security for continuing in their present place of abode: That laics should not be accused in spiritual courts, except by legal and reputable promoters and witnesses: That no chief tenant of the crown should be excommunicated, nor his lands be put under an interdict, except with the king's consent: That all appeals in spiritual causes should be carried from the archdeacon to the bishop, from the bishop to the primate, from him to the king; and should be carried no farther without the king's consent: That if any law-suit arose between a layman and a clergyman concerning a tenant, and it be disputed whether the land be a lay or an ecclesiastical fee, it should first be determined by the verdict of twelve lawful men to what class it belonged, and if it be found to be a lay-fee, the cause should finally be determined in the civil courts: That no inhabitant in demesne should be excommunicated for non-appearance in a spiritual court, till the chief offi-

[d] Fitz-Steph. p. 33.

cer

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cer of the place, where he reſides, be conſulted, that he may compel him by the civil authority to give ſatisfaction to the church: That the archbiſhops, biſhops, and other ſpiritual dignitaries ſhould be regarded as barons of the realm; ſhould poſſeſs the privileges and be ſubjected to the burthens belonging to that rank; and ſhould be bound to attend the king in his great councils, and aſſiſt at all trials, till the ſentence, either of death or loſs of members, be given againſt the criminal: That the revenue of vacant ſees ſhould belong to the king; the chapter, or ſuch of them as he pleaſes to ſummon, ſhould ſit in the king's chapel till they make the new election with his conſent, and that the biſhop-elect ſhould do homage to the crown: That if any baron or tenant *in capite* ſhould refuſe to ſubmit to the ſpiritual courts, the king ſhould employ his authority in obliging him to make ſuch ſubmiſſions; if any of them throw off his allegiance to the king, the prelates ſhould aſſiſt the king with their cenſures in reducing him: That goods, forfeited to the king, ſhould not be protected in churches or church-yards: That the clergy ſhould no longer pretend to the right of enforcing payment of debts contracted by oath or promiſe; but ſhould leave theſe law-ſuits, equally with others, to the determination of the civil courts: And that the ſons of villains ſhould not be ordained clerks, without the conſent of their lord [c].

THESE articles, to the number of ſixteen, were calculated to prevent the chief abuſes, which had prevailed in eccleſiaſtical affairs, and to put an effectual ſtop to the uſurpations of the church, which, gradually ſtealing on, had threatened the total deſtruction of the civil power. Henry, therefore, by reducing thoſe ancient cuſtoms of the realm to writing, and by collecting them in a body, endeavoured to prevent all future diſpute with regard to

[c] Hiſt. Quadr. p. 163. M. Paris, p. 70, 71. Spelm. Conc. vol. ii. p. 63. Gervaſe, p. 1386, 1387. Wilkins, p. 321.

them;

them; and by passing so many ecclesiastical ordinances in a national and civil assembly, he fully established the superiority of the legislature above all papal decrees or spiritual canons, and gained a signal victory over the ecclesiastics. But as he knew, that the bishops, though overawed by the present combination of the crown and the barons, would take the first favourable opportunity of denying the authority, which had enacted these constitutions; he resolved, that they should all set their seal to them, and give a promise to observe them. None of the prelates dared to oppose his will; except Becket, who, though urged by the earls of Cornwal and Leicester, the barons of principal authority in the kingdom, obstinately with-held his assent. At last, Richard de Hastings, grand prior of the templars in England, threw himself on his knees before him; and with many tears, entreated him, if he paid any regard, either to his own safety or that of the church, not to provoke, by a fruitless opposition, the indignation of a great monarch, who was resolutely bent on his purpose, and who was determined to take full revenge on every one, who should dare to oppose him [f]. Becket, finding himself deserted by all the world, even by his own brethren, was at last obliged to comply; and he promised, *legally, with good faith, and without fraud or reserve* [g], to observe the constitutions; and he took an oath to that purpose [h]. The king, thinking that he had now finally prevailed in this great enterprize, sent the constitutions to pope Alexander, who then resided in France; and he required that pontiff's ratification of them: But Alexander, who had owed most important obligations to the king, but who plainly saw, that these laws were calculated to establish the independancy of England on the papacy, and of the royal power on the

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[f] Hist. Quad. p. 38. Hoveden, p. 493. [g] Fitz-Steph. p. 35. Epist. St. Thom. p. 25. [h] Fitz-Steph. p. 45. Hist. Quad. p. 39. Gervase, p. 1386.

clergy,

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clergy, condemned them in the ſtrongeſt terms; abrogated, annulled, and rejected them. There were only ſix articles, the leaſt important, which, for the ſake of peace, he was willing to ratify.

BECKET, when he obſerved, that he might hope for ſupport in an oppoſition, expreſſed the deepeſt ſorrow for his compliance; and endeavoured to engage all the other biſhops in a confederacy to adhere to their common rights, and to the eccleſiaſtical privileges, in which he repreſented the intereſt and honour of God to be ſo deeply concerned. He redoubled his auſterities in order to puniſh himſelf for his criminal aſſent to the conſtitutions of Clarendon: He proportioned his diſcipline to the enormity of his ſuppoſed offence: And he refuſed to exerciſe any part of his archiepiſcopal function, till he ſhould receive abſolution from the pope, which was readily granted him. Henry, informed of his preſent diſpoſitions, reſolved to take vengeance for this refractory behaviour; and he attempted to cruſh him, by means of that very power which Becket made ſuch merit in ſupporting. He applied to the pope, that he ſhould grant the commiſſion of legate in his dominions to the archbiſhop of York; but Alexander, as politic as he, though he granted the commiſſion, annexed a clauſe, that it ſhould not impower the legate to execute any act in prejudice of the archbiſhop of Canterbury [i]: And the king, finding how fruitleſs ſuch an authority would prove, ſent back the commiſſion by the ſame meſſenger who brought it [k].

THE primate, however, who found himſelf ſtill expoſed to the king's indignation, endeavoured twice to eſcape ſecretly from the kingdom; but was as often detained by contrary winds: And Henry haſtened to make him feel the effects of an obſtinacy, which he deemed ſo

[i] Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 13, 14.

[k] Hoveden, p. 493. Gervaſe, p. 1388.

criminal.

criminal. He inſtigated John, mareſchal of the exche- CHAP. VIII.
quer, to ſue Becket in the archiepiſcopal court for ſome lands, part of the manor of Pageham; and to appeal from thence to the king's court for juſtice [l]. On the day appointed for trying the cauſe, the primate ſent four knights, to repreſent certain irregularities in John's appeal; and at the ſame time to excuſe himſelf, on account of ſickneſs, for not appearing perſonally that day in the court. This ſlight offence (if it even deſerve that name) was repreſented as a grievous contempt; the four knights were menaced, and with difficulty eſcaped being ſent to priſon, as offering falſehoods to the court *; and Henry, being determined to proſecute Becket to the utmoſt, ſummoned at Northampton a great council, which he propoſed to make the inſtrument of his vengeance againſt this inflexible prelate. 1164.

THE king had raiſed Becket from a low ſtation to the higheſt offices, had honoured him with his countenance and friendſhip, had truſted to his aſſiſtance in forwarding his favourite project againſt the clergy; and when he found him become of a ſudden his moſt rigid opponent, while every one beſide complied with his will, rage at the diſappointment, and indignation againſt ſuch ſignal ingratitude, tranſported him beyond all bounds of moderation; and there ſeems to have entered more of paſſion than of juſtice or even of policy, in this violent proſecution [m]. The barons, notwithſtanding, in the great council voted whatever ſentence he was pleaſed to dictate to them; and the biſhops themſelves, who undoubtedly bore a ſecret favour to Becket, and regarded him as the martyr of their privileges, concurred with the reſt, in the deſign of oppreſſing their primate. In vain did Becket urge, that his court was proceeding with the utmoſt re-

[l] Hoveden, p. 494. M. Paris, p. 72. Diceto, p. 537.

* See note [R] at the end of the volume.

[m] Neubr. p. 304.

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gularity and juſtice in trying the mareſchal's cauſe, which, however, he ſaid, would appear, from the ſheriff's teſtimony, to be entirely unjuſt and iniquitous: That he himſelf had diſcovered no contempt of the king's court; but on the contrary, by ſending four knights to excuſe his abſence, had virtually acknowledged its authority: That he alſo, in conſequence of the king's ſummons, perſonally appeared at preſent in the great council, ready to juſtify his cauſe againſt the mareſchal, and to ſubmit his conduct to their enquiry and juriſdiction: That even ſhould he be found to have been guilty of non-appearance, the laws had affixed a very ſlight penalty to that offence: And that, as he was an inhabitant of Kent, where his archiepiſcopal palace was ſeated, he was by law entitled to ſome greater indulgence than uſual in the rate of his fine [n]. Notwithſtanding theſe pleas, he was condemned as guilty of a contempt of the king's court, and as wanting in the fealty which he had ſworn to his ſovereign; all his goods and chattels were confiſcated [o]; and that this triumph over the church might be carried to the utmoſt, Henry, biſhop of Wincheſter, the prelate who had been ſo powerful in the former reign, was, in ſpite of his remonſtrances, obliged, by order of the court, to pronounce the ſentence againſt him [p]. The primate ſubmitted to the decree; and all the prelates, except Folliot, biſhop of London, who paid court to the king by this ſingularity, became ſureties for him [q]. It is remarkable, that ſeveral Norman barons voted in this council; and we may conclude, with ſome probability, that a like practice had prevailed in many of the great councils ſummoned ſince the conqueſt. For the contemporary hiſtorian, who has given us a full account of theſe tranſactions, does not

[n] Fitz-Steph. p. 37, 42. [o] Hiſt. Quad. p. 47. Hoveden, p. 494. Gervaſe, p. 1389. [p] Fitz-Steph. p. 37. [q] Ibid. p. 37.

mention this circumſtance as any wiſe ſingular[r]; and Becket, in all his ſubſequent remonſtrances with regard to the ſevere treatment, which he had met with, never founds any objection on an irregularity, which to us appears very palpable and flagrant. So little preciſion was there at that time in the government and conſtitution! 1164.

The king was not content with this ſentence, however violent and oppreſſive. Next day, he demanded of Becket the ſum of three hundred pounds, which the primate had levied upon the honours of Eye and Berkham, while in his poſſeſſion. Becket, after premiſing that he was not obliged to anſwer to this ſuit, becauſe it was not contained in his ſummons; after remarking, that he had expended more than that ſum in the repairs of thoſe caſtles and of the royal palace at London; expreſſed however his reſolution not to allow money to be any ground of quarrel between him and his ſovereign: He agreed to pay the ſum; and immediately gave ſureties for it[s]. In the ſubſequent meeting, the king demanded five hundred marks, which, he affirmed, he had lent Becket during the war at Thouloufe[t]; and another ſum to the ſame amount, for which that prince had been ſurety for him to a Jew. Immediately after theſe two claims, he preferred a third of ſtill greater importance: He required him to give in the accounts of his adminiſtration while chancellor, and to pay the balance due from the revenues of all the prelacies, abbies, and baronies, which had, during that time, been ſubjected to his management[u]. Becket obſerved, that, as this demand was totally unexpected, he had not come prepared to anſwer it; but he required a delay, and promiſed in that caſe to give ſatisfaction. The king inſiſted upon ſureties; and Becket

[r] Fitz Steph. p. 36. [s] Ibid. p 38. [t] Hiſt. Quad. p. 47.
[u] Hoveden, p. 494. Diceto, p. 537.

deſired

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desired leave to consult with his suffragans in a case of such importance [w].

1164. It is apparent, from the known character of Henry, and from the usual vigilance of his government, that, when he promoted Becket to the see of Canterbury, he was, on good grounds, well pleased with his administration in the former high office, with which he had entrusted him; and that, even if that prelate had dissipated money beyond the income of his place, the king was satisfied that his expences were not blameable, and had in the main been calculated for his service [x]. Two years had since elapsed; no demand had during that time been made upon him; it was not till the quarrel arose concerning ecclesiastical privileges, that the claim was started, and the primate was, of a sudden, required to produce accounts of such intricacy and extent before a tribunal, which had shown a determined resolution to ruin and oppress him. To find sureties, that he should answer so boundless and uncertain a claim, which in the king's estimation amounted to 44,000 marks [y], was impracticable; and Becket's suffragans were extremely at a loss what counsel to give him, in such a critical emergency. By the advice of the bishop of Winchester he offered two thousand marks as a general satisfaction for all demands: But this offer was rejected by the king [z]. Some prelates exhorted him to resign his see, on condition of receiving an acquital: Others were of opinion, that he ought to submit himself entirely to the king's mercy [a]: But the primate, thus pushed to the utmost, had too much courage to sink under oppression: He determined to brave all his enemies, to trust to the sacredness of his character for protection, to involve his cause with that of God and religion, and to stand the utmost efforts of royal indignation.

[w] Fitz Steph. p. 38. [x] Hoveden, p. 495. [y] Epist. St. Thom. p. 315. [z] Fitz Steph. p. 38. [a] Fitz Steph. p. 39. Gervase, p. 1390.

AFTER

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1164.

AFTER a few days, ſpent in deliberation, Becket went to church, and ſaid maſs, where he had previouſly ordered, that the introit to the communion ſervice ſhould begin with theſe words, *Princes ſat and ſpake againſt me*; the paſſage appointed for the martyrdom of St. Stephen, whom the primate thereby tacitly pretended to reſemble in his ſufferings for the ſake of righteouſneſs. He went thence to court arrayed in his ſacred veſtments: As ſoon as he arrived within the palace gate he took the croſs into his own hands, bore it aloft as his protection, and marched in that poſture into the royal apartments [b]. The king, who was in an inner room, was aſtoniſhed at this parade, by which the primate ſeemed to menace him and his court with the ſentence of excommunication; and he ſent ſome of the prelates to remonſtrate with him on account of ſuch audacious behaviour. Theſe prelates complained to Becket, that, by ſubſcribing, himſelf, to the conſtitutions of Clarendon, he had ſeduced them to imitate his example; and that now, when it was too late, he pretended to ſhake off all ſubordination to the civil power, and appeared deſirous of involving them in the guilt, which muſt attend any violation of thoſe laws, eſtabliſhed by their conſent and ratified by their ſubſcriptions [c]. Becket replied, that he had indeed ſubſcribed the conſtitutions of Clarendon, *legally, with good faith, and without fraud or reſerve*; but in theſe words was virtually implied a ſalvo for the rights of their order, which, being connected with the cauſe of God and his church, could never be relinquiſhed by their oaths and engagements: That if he and they had erred, in reſigning the eccleſiaſtical privileges, the beſt atonement they could now make was to retract their conſent, which in ſuch a caſe could never be obligatory, and to follow the pope's authority, who had ſo-

[b] Fitz-Steph. p. 40. Hiſt. Quad. p. 53. Hoveden, p. 494. Neubr. p. 394. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 43. [c] Fitz-Steph. p. 35.

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lemnly abrogated the conſtitutions of Clarendon, and had abſolved them from all oaths which they had taken to obſerve them: That a determined reſolution was evidently embraced to oppreſs the church; the ſtorm had firſt broken upon him; for a ſlight offence, and which too was even falſely imputed to him, he had been tyrannically condemned to a grievous penalty; a new and unheard-of claim was ſince ſtarted, in which he could expect no juſtice; and he plainly ſaw, that he was the deſtined victim, who, by his ruin, muſt prepare the way for the abrogation of all ſpiritual immunities: That he ſtrictly inhibited them who were his ſuffragans, from aſſiſting at any ſuch trial, or giving their ſanction to any ſentence againſt him; he put himſelf and his ſee under the protection of the ſupreme pontiff; and appealed to him againſt any penalty, which his iniquitous judges might think proper to inflict upon him: And that, however terrible the indignation of ſo great a monarch as Henry, his ſword could only kill the body; while that of the church, entruſted into the hands of the primate, could kill the ſoul, and throw the diſobedient into infinite and eternal perdition [d].

Appeals to the pope, even in eccleſiaſtical cauſes, had been aboliſhed by the conſtitutions of Clarendon, and were become criminal by law; but an appeal in a civil cauſe, ſuch as the king's demand upon Becket, was a practice altogether new and unprecedented; tended directly to the ſubverſion of the government; and could receive no colour of excuſe, except from the determined reſolution, which was but too apparent, in Henry and the great council, to effectuate, without juſtice, but under colour of law, the total ruin of the inflexible pri-

[d] Fitz-Steph. p. 42, 44, 45, 46. Hiſt. Quad. p. 57. Hoveden, p. 495. M. Paris, p. 72. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 45, 195.

mate.

mate. The king, having now obtained a pretext so much more plausible for his violence, would probably have pushed this affair to the utmost extremity against him; but Becket gave him no leisure to conduct the prosecution. He refused so much as to hear the sentence, which the barons, sitting apart from the bishops, and joined to some sheriffs and barons of the second rank [c], had given upon the king's claim: He departed from the palace; asked Henry's immediate permission to leave Northampton; and upon meeting with a refusal, he withdrew secretly; wandered about in disguise for some time; and at last took shipping and arrived safely at Gravelines. CHAP. VIII. 1164. Banishment of Becket.

THE violent and unjust prosecution of Becket, had a natural tendency to turn the public favour on his side, and to make men forget his former ingratitude towards the king, and his departure from all oaths and engagements, as well as the enormity of those ecclesiastical privileges, of which he affected to be the champion. There were many other reasons, which procured him countenance and protection in foreign countries. Philip, earl of Flanders [f], and Lewis, king of France [g], jealous of the rising greatness of Henry, were well pleased to give him disturbance in his government: Forgetting that this was the common cause of princes, they affected to pity extremely the condition of the exiled primate; and the latter even honoured him with a visit at Soissons, in which city he had invited him to fix his residence [h]. The pope, whose interests were more immediately concerned in supporting him, gave a cold reception to a magnificent embassy, which Henry sent to accuse him; while Becket himself,

[c] Fitz-Steph. p. 46. This historian is supposed to mean the more considerable vassals of the chief barons: These had no title to sit in the great council, and the giving them a place there was a palpable irregularity: Which however is not insisted on in any of Becket's remonstrances. A farther proof how little fixed the constitution was at that time! [f] Epist. St. Thom. p. 35. [g] Ibid. p. 36, 37. [h] Hist. Quad. p. 76.

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who had come to Sens, in order to juſtify his cauſe before the ſovereign pontiff, was received with the greateſt
1164. marks of diſtinction. The king, in revenge, ſequeſtered the revenues of Canterbury; and by a conduct, which might be eſteemed arbitrary, had there been at that time any regular check on royal authority, he baniſhed all the primate's relations and domeſtics, to the number of four hundred, whom he obliged to ſwear, before their departure, that they would inſtantly join their patron. But this policy, by which Henry endeavoured to reduce Becket ſooner to neceſſity, loſt its effect: The pope, when they arrived beyond ſea, abſolved them from their oath, and diſtributed them among the convents in France and Flanders: A reſidence was aſſigned to Becket himſelf in the convent of Pontigny, where he lived for ſome years in great magnificence, partly from a penſion granted him on the revenues of that abbey, partly from remittances made him by the French monarch.

1165. THE more to ingratiate himſelf with the pope, Becket reſigned into his hands the ſee of Canterbury, to which, he affirmed, he had been uncanonically elected, by the authority of the royal mandate; and Alexander in his turn, beſides inveſting him anew with that dignity, pretended to abrogate by a bull the ſentence, which the great council of England had paſſed againſt him. Henry, after attempting in vain to procure a conference with the pope, who departed ſoon after for Rome, whither the proſperous condition of his affairs now invited him; made proviſions againſt the conſequences of that breach, which impended between his kingdom and the apoſtolic ſee. He iſſued orders to his juſticiaries, inhibiting, under ſevere penalties, all appeals to the pope or archbiſhop; forbidding any one to receive any mandates from them, or apply in any caſe to their authority; declaring it treaſon-

able

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able to bring from either of them an interdict upon the kingdom, and punishable in secular clergymen, by the loss of their eyes and by castration, in regulars by amputation of their feet, and in laics with death; and menacing with sequestration and banishment the persons themselves, as well as their kindred, who should pay obedience to any such interdict: And he farther obliged all his subjects to swear to the observance of those orders [i]. These were edicts of the utmost importance, affected the lives and properties of all the subjects, and even changed, for the time, the national religion, by breaking off all communication with Rome: Yet were they enacted by the sole authority of the king, and were derived entirely from his will and pleasure.

THE spiritual powers, which, in the primitive church, were, in a great measure, dependant on the civil, had, by a gradual progress, reached an equality and independance; and though the limits of the two jurisdictions were difficult to ascertain or define, it was not impossible, but, by moderation on both sides, government might still have been conducted, in that imperfect and irregular manner which attends all human institutions. But as the ignorance of the age encouraged the ecclesiastics daily to extend their privileges, and even to advance maxims totally incompatible with civil government [k]; Henry had thought it high time to put an end to their pretensions, and formally, in a public council, to fix those powers which belonged to the magistrate, and which he was for the future determined to maintain. In this attempt, he was led to re-establish customs, which, though antient, were beginning to be abolished by a contrary practice, and which were still more strongly opposed by the prevailing

i Hist. Quad. p. 88, 167. Hoveden, p. 496. M. Paris, p. 73.

k *Quis dubitet*, says Becket to the king, *sacerdotes Christi regum et principum omniumque fidelium patres et magistros censeri.* Epist. St. Thom. p. 97, 148.

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opinions and ſentiments of the age. Principle, therefore, ſtood on the one ſide; power on the other; and if the Engliſh had been actuated by conſcience, more than by preſent intereſt, the controverſy muſt ſoon, by the general defection of Henry's ſubjects, have been decided againſt him. Becket, in order to forward this event, filled all places with exclamations againſt the violence which he had ſuffered. He compared himſelf to Chriſt, who had been condemned by a lay tribunal [l], and who was crucified anew in the preſent oppreſſions under which his church laboured: He took it for granted, as a point inconteſtible, that his cauſe was the cauſe of God [m]: He aſſumed the character of champion for the patrimony of the divinity: He pretended to be the ſpiritual father of the king and all the people of England [n]: He even told Henry, that kings reign ſolely by the authority of the church [o]: And though he had thus torn off the veil more openly on the one ſide, than that prince had on the other, he ſeemed ſtill, from the general favour borne him by the eccleſiaſtics, to have all the advantage in the argument. The king, that he might employ the weapons of temporal power remaining in his hands, ſuſpended the payment of Peter's-pence; he made advances towards an alliance with the emperor, Frederic Barbaroſſa, who was at that time engaged in violent wars with pope Alexander; he diſcovered ſome intentions of acknowledging Paſcal III. the preſent anti-pope, who was protected by that emperor; and by theſe expedients he endeavoured to terrify the enterpriſing, though prudent pontiff, from proceeding to extremities againſt him.

[l] Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 62, 107, 194. [m] Ibid. p. 29, 30, 31, 226. [n] Fitz-Steph. p. 46. Epiſt. St. Thom. 52, 148. [o] Brady's Append. No 56. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 94, 95, 97, 99, 197. Hoveden, p. 497.

But

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1166.

But the violence of Becket, ſtill more than the nature of the controverſy, kept affairs from remaining long in ſuſpenſe between the parties. That prelate, inſtigated by revenge, and animated by the preſent glory attending his ſituation, puſhed matters to a deciſion, and iſſued out a cenſure, excommunicating the king's chief miniſters by name, and comprehending in general all thoſe who favoured or obeyed the conſtitutions of Clarendon: Theſe conſtitutions he abrogated and annulled; he abſolved all men from the oaths which they had taken to obſerve them; and he ſuſpended the ſpiritual thunder over Henry himſelf, only that the prince might avoid the blow by a timely repentance [p].

The ſituation of Henry was ſo unhappy, that he could employ no expedient for ſaving his miniſters from this terrible cenſure, but by appealing to the pope himſelf, and having recourſe to a tribunal, whoſe authority he had himſelf attempted to abridge in this very article of appeals, and which, he knew, was ſo deeply engaged on the ſide of his adverſary. But even this expedient was not likely to be long effectual. Becket had obtained from the pope a legantine commiſſion over England; and in virtue of that authority, which admitted of no appeal, he ſummoned the biſhops of London, Saliſbury, and others, to attend him, and ordered, under pain of excommunication, the eccleſiaſtics, ſequeſtered on his account, to be reſtored in two months to all their benefices. But John of Oxford, the king's agent with the pope, had the addreſs to procure orders for ſuſpending this ſentence; and he gave the pontiff ſuch hopes of a ſpeedy reconcilement between the king and Becket, that two legates, William of Pavia and Otho, were ſent to Normandy, where the king then reſided, and endeavoured to find

[p] Fitz-Steph. p. 56. Hiſt. Quad. p. 93. M. Paris, p. 74. Beaulieu Vie de St. Thom. p. 213. Epiſt. Thom. p. 149, 229. Hoveden, p. 499.

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expedients for that purpose. But the pretensions of the parties were, as yet, too opposite to admit of an accommodation: The king required, that all the constitutions of Clarendon should be ratified: Becket, that, previously to any agreement, he and his adherents should be restored to their possessions: And as the legates had no power to pronounce a definitive sentence on either side, the negotiation soon after came to nothing. The cardinal of Pavia also, being much attached to Henry, took care to protract the negotiation; to mitigate the pope, by the accounts which he sent of that prince's conduct; and to procure him every possible indulgence from the see of Rome. About this time, the king had also the address to obtain a dispensation for the marriage of his third son, Geoffrey, with the heiress of Britanny; a concession, which, considering Henry's demerits towards the church, gave great scandal both to Becket, and to his zealous patron, the king of France.

1166.

1167.

The intricacies of the feudal law had, in that age, rendered the boundaries of power between the prince and his vassals, and between one prince and another, as uncertain as those between the crown and the mitre; and all wars took their origin from disputes, which, had there been any tribunal possessed of power to enforce their decrees, ought to have been decided only before a court of judicature. Henry, in prosecution of some controversies, in which he was involved with the count of Auvergne, a vassal of the dutchy of Guienne, had invaded the territories of that count; who had recourse to the king of France, his superior lord, for protection, and thereby kindled a war between the two monarchs. But this war was, as usual, no less feeble in its operations, than it was frivolous in its cause and object; and after occasioning some mutual depredations [q], and some insurrec-

[q] Hoveden, p. 517. M. Paris, p. 75. Diceto, p. 547. Gervase, p. 1402, 1403. Robert de Monte.

tions

tions among the barons of Poictou and Guienne, was terminated by a peace. The terms of this peace were rather disadvantageous to Henry, and prove, that that prince had, by reason of his contest with the church, lost the superiority, which he had hitherto maintained over the crown of France: An additional motive to him for accommodating those differences. CHAP. VIII. 1167.

THE pope and the king began at last to perceive, that, in the present situation of affairs, neither of them could expect a final and decisive victory over the other, and that they had more to fear than to hope from the duration of the controversy. Though the vigour of Henry's government had confirmed his authority in all his dominions, his throne might be shaken by a sentence of excommunication; and if England itself could, by its situation, be more easily guarded against the contagion of superstitious prejudices, his French provinces at least, whose communication was open with the neighbouring states, would be much exposed, on that account, to some great revolution or convulsion[r]. He could not, therefore, reasonably imagine, that the pope, while he retained such a check upon him, would formally recognize the constitutions of Clarendon, which both put an end to papal pretensions in England, and would give an example to other states of asserting a like independancy[s]. Pope Alexander, on the other hand, being still engaged in dangerous wars with the emperor Frederic, might justly apprehend, that Henry, rather than relinquish claims of such importance, would join the party of his enemy; and as the trials hitherto made of the spiritual weapons by Becket had not succeeded to his expectation, and every thing had remained quiet in all the king's dominions, nothing seemed impossible to the capacity and vigilance of so great a monarch. The disposition of

[r] Epist. St. Thom. p. 230. [s] Ibid. p. 276.

minds

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minds on both sides, resulting from these circumstances, produced frequent attempts towards an accommodation; but as both parties knew, that the essential articles of the dispute could not then be terminated, they entertained a perpetual jealousy of each other, and were anxious not to lose the least advantage in the negotiation. The nuncios, Gratian and Vivian, having received a commission to endeavour a reconciliation, met with the king in Normandy; and after all differences seemed to be adjusted, the king offered to sign the treaty, with a salvo to his royal dignity; which gave such umbrage to Becket, that the negotiation, in the end, became fruitless, and the excommunications were renewed against the king's ministers. Another negotiation was conducted at Montmirail, in the presence of the king of France and the French prelates; where Becket also offered to make his submissions, with a salvo to the honour of God, and the liberties of the church; which, for a like reason, was extremely offensive to the king, and rendered the treaty abortive. A third conference, under the same mediation, was broken off, by Becket's insisting on a like reserve in his submissions; and even in a fourth treaty, when all the terms were adjusted, and when the primate expected to be introduced to the king, and to receive the kiss of peace, which it was usual for princes to grant in those times, and which was regarded as a sure pledge of forgiveness, Henry refused him that honour; under pretence, that, during his anger, he had made a rash vow to that purpose. This formality served, among such jealous spirits, to prevent the conclusion of the treaty; and though the difficulty was attempted to be overcome by a dispensation which the pope granted to Henry from his rash vow, that prince could not be prevailed on to depart from the resolution which he had taken.

1168.

1169.

In one of these conferences, at which the French king was present, Henry said to that monarch: "There have "been

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"been many kings of England, some of greater, some "of less authority than myself: There have also been "many archbishops of Canterbury, holy and good men, "and entitled to every kind of respect: Let Becket but "act towards me with the same submission, which the "greatest of his predecessors have paid to the least of "mine, and there shall be no controversy between us." Lewis was so struck with this state of the case, and with an offer which Henry made to submit his cause to the French clergy, that he could not forbear condemning the primate, and withdrawing his friendship from him during some time: But the bigotry of that prince, and their common animosity against Henry, soon produced a renewal of their former good correspondence.

1169.

All difficulties were at last adjusted between the parties; and the king allowed Becket to return, on conditions which may be esteemed both honourable and advantageous to that prelate. He was not required to give up any rights of the church, or resign any of those pretensions, which had been the original ground of the controversy. It was agreed, that all these questions should be buried in oblivion; but that Becket and his adherents should, without making further submissions, be restored to all their livings, and that even the possessors of such benefices as depended on the see of Canterbury, and had been filled during the primate's absence, should be expelled, and Becket have liberty to supply the vacancies [t]. In return for concessions, which entrenched so deeply on the honour and dignity of the crown, Henry reaped only the advantage of seeing his ministers absolved from the sentence of excommunication denounced against them, and of preventing the interdict, which, if these hard conditions had not been complied with, was ready to be

1170. 22d July.

Compromise with Becket.

[t] Fitz-Steph. p. 68, 69. Hoveden, p. 529.

laid

CHAP. VIII. 1770.

laid on all his dominions [x]. It was eaſy to ſee how much he dreaded that event, when a prince of ſo high a ſpirit could ſubmit to terms ſo diſhonourable, in order to prevent it. So anxious was Henry to accommodate all differences, and to reconcile himſelf fully with Becket, that he took the moſt extraordinary ſteps to flatter his vanity, and even on one occaſion humiliated himſelf ſo far as to hold the ſtirrup of that haughty prelate, while he mounted [y].

But the king attained not even that temporary tranquillity, which he had hoped to reap from theſe expedients. During the heat of his quarrel with Becket, while he was every day expecting an interdict to be laid on his kingdom, and a ſentence of excommunication to be denounced againſt his perſon, he had thought it prudent to have his ſon, prince Henry, aſſociated with him in the royalty, and to make him be crowned king, by the hands of Roger archbiſhop of York. By this precaution, he both enſured the ſucceſſion of that prince, which, conſidering the many paſt irregularities in that point, could not but be eſteemed ſomewhat precarious; and he preſerved at leaſt his family on the throne, if the ſentence of excommunication ſhould have the effect which he dreaded, and ſhould make his ſubjects renounce their allegiance to him. Though this deſign was conducted with the utmoſt expedition and ſecrecy, Becket, before it was carried into execution, had got intelligence of it; and being deſirous of obſtructing all Henry's meaſures, as well as anxious to prevent this affront to himſelf, who pretended a ſole right, as archbiſhop of Canterbury, to officiate in the coronation, he had inhibited all the prelates of England from aſſiſting at this ceremony, had

[x] Hiſt. Quad. p. 104. Brompton, p. 1062. Gervaſe, p. 1408. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 704, 705, 706, 707, 792, 793, 794. Benedict. Abbas, p. 70.
[y] Epiſt. 45. lib. 5.

procured

CHAP. VIII. 1170.

procured a mandate to the same purpose from the pope [z], and had incited the king of France to protest against the coronation of young Henry, unless the princess, daughter of that monarch, should at the same time receive the royal unction. There prevailed in that age an opinion, which was akin to its other superstitions, that the royal unction was essential to the exercise of royal power [a]: It was therefore natural both for the king of France, careful of his daughter the princess Margaret's establishment, and for Becket, jealous of his own dignity, to demand, in the treaty with Henry, some satisfaction in this essential point. Henry, after apologizing to Lewis for the omission with regard to Margaret, and excusing it on account of the secrecy and dispatch requisite for conducting that measure, promised that the ceremony should be again renewed in the persons both of the prince and princess: And he assured Becket, that, besides receiving the acknowledgments of Roger and the other bishops for the seeming affront put on the see of Canterbury, he should, as a farther satisfaction, recover his rights by officiating in this coronation. But the violent spirit of Becket, elated by the power of the church, and by the victory which he had already obtained over his sovereign, was not content with this voluntary compensation, but resolved to make the injury, which he pretended to have suffered, a handle for taking revenge on all his enemies. On his arrival in England, he met the archbishop of York and the bishops of London and Salisbury, who were on their journey to the king in Normandy: He notified to the archbishop the sentence of suspension, and to the two bishops that of excommunication, which, at his solicitation, the pope had pronounced against them. Reginald de Warenne, and Gervase de Cornhill, two of the king's ministers, who were employed on their duty

Becket's return from banishment.

[z] Hist. Quad. p. 103. Epist. St. Thom. p. 681. Gervase, p. 1412.
[a] Epist. St. Thom. p. 708.

in

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1170. in Kent, asked him, on hearing of this bold attempt, whether he meant to bring fire and sword into the kingdom? But the primate, heedless of the reproof, proceeded, in the most ostentatious manner, to take possession of his diocese. In Rochester, and all the towns through which he passed, he was received with the shouts and acclamations of the populace. As he approached Southwark, the clergy, the laity, men of all ranks and ages, came forth to meet him, and celebrated with hymns of joy his triumphant entrance. And though he was obliged, by order of the young prince, who resided at Woodstoke, to return to his diocese, he found that he was not mistaken, when he reckoned upon the highest veneration of the public towards his person and his dignity. He proceeded, therefore, with the more courage to dart his spiritual thunders: He issued the sentence of excommunication against Robert de Broc, and Nigel de Sackville, with many others, who either had assisted at the coronation of the young prince, or been active in the late persecution of the exiled clergy. This violent measure, by which he, in effect, denounced war against the king himself, is commonly ascribed to the vindictive disposition and imperious character of Becket; but as this prelate was also a man of acknowledged abilities, we are not, in his passions alone, to look for the cause of his conduct, when he proceeded to these extremities against his enemies. His sagacity had led him to discover all Henry's intentions; and he purposed, by this bold and unexpected assault, to prevent the execution of them.

The king, from his experience of the dispositions of his people, was become sensible, that his enterprize had been too bold, in establishing the constitutions of Clarendon, in defining all the branches of royal power, and in endeavouring to extort from the church of England, as as well as from the pope, an express avowal of these disputed prerogatives. Conscious also of his own violence,

in attempting to break or subdue the inflexible primate, he was not displeased to undo that measure, which had given his enemies such advantage against him; and he was contented, that the controversy should terminate in that ambiguous manner, which was the utmost that princes, in those ages, could hope to attain in their disputes with the see of Rome. Though he dropped for the present, the prosecution of Becket, he still reserved to himself the right of maintaining, that the constitutions of Clarendon, the original ground of the quarrel, were both the ancient customs and the present law of the realm: And though he knew, that the papal clergy asserted them to be impious in themselves, as well as abrogated by the sentence of the sovereign pontiff, he proposed, in spite of their clamours, steadily to put those laws in execution [b], and to trust to his own ability, and to the course of events, for success in that perilous enterprize. He hoped, that Becket's experience of a six years' exile would, after his pride was fully gratified by his restoration, be sufficient to teach him more reserve in his opposition: Or if any controversy arose, he expected thenceforth to engage in a more favourable cause, and to maintain with advantage, while the primate was now in his power [c], the ancient and undoubted customs of the kingdom against the usurpations of the clergy. But Becket, determined not to betray the ecclesiastical privileges by his connivance [d], and apprehensive lest a prince of such profound policy, if allowed to proceed in his own way, might probably in the end prevail, resolved to take all the advantage which his present victory gave him, and to disconcert the cautious measures of the king, by the vehemence and rigour of his own conduct [e]. Assured of support from Rome, he was little intimidated by dangers, which his courage taught him to despise, and which, even if attended with

CHAP. VIII. 1170.

[b] Epist. St. Thom. p. 837, 839. [c] Fitz-Steph. p. 65.
[d] Epist. St. Thom. p. 315. [e] Fitz-Steph. p. 74.

the

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the moſt fatal conſequences, would ſerve only to gratify his ambition and thirſt of glory [f].

1170. When the ſuſpended and excommunicated prelates arrived at Baieux, where the king then reſided, and complained to him of the violent proceedings of Becket, he inſtantly perceived the conſequences; was ſenſible, that his whole plan of operations was overthrown; foreſaw, that the dangerous conteſt between the civil and ſpiritual powers, a conteſt which he himſelf had firſt rouzed, but which he had endeavoured, by all his late negotiations and conceſſions, to appeaſe, muſt come to an immediate and deciſive iſſue; and he was thence thrown into the moſt violent commotion. The archbiſhop of York remarked to him, that, ſo long as Becket lived, he could never expect to enjoy peace or tranquillity: The king himſelf, being vehemently agitated, burſt forth into an exclamation againſt his ſervants, whoſe want of zeal, he ſaid, had ſo long left him expoſed to the enterprizes of that ungrateful and imperious prelate [g]. Four gentlemen of his houſehold, Reginald Fitz-Urſe, William de Traci, Hugh de Moreville, and Richard Brito, taking theſe paſſionate expreſſions to be a hint for Becket's death, immediately communicated their thoughts to each other; and ſwearing to avenge their prince's quarrel, ſecretly withdrew from court [h]. Some menacing expreſſions, which they had dropped, gave a ſuſpicion of their deſign; and the king diſpatched a meſſenger after them, charging them to attempt nothing againſt the perſon of the primate [i]: But theſe orders arrived too late to prevent their fatal purpoſe. The four aſſaſſins, though they took different roads to England, arrived nearly about the ſame time at Saltwoode near Canterbury; and being there joined by ſome aſſiſtants, they proceeded in great haſte to

[f] Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 838, 843. [g] Gervaſe, p. 1414. Parker, p. 207. [h] M. Paris, p. 85. Brompton, p. 1063. Bened. Abbas, p. 10. [i] Hiſt. Quad. p. 144. Trivet, p. 55.

the

the archiepiſcopal palace. They found the primate, who truſted entirely to the ſacredneſs of his character, very ſlenderly attended; and though they threw out many menaces and reproaches againſt him, he was ſo incapable of fear, that, without uſing any precautions againſt their violence, he immediately went to St. Benedict's church, to hear veſpers. They followed him thither, attacked him before the altar, and having cloven his head with many blows, retired without meeting any oppoſition. This was the tragical end of Thomas a Becket, a prelate of the moſt lofty, intrepid, and inflexible ſpirit, who was able to cover, to the world and probably to himſelf, the enterprizes of pride and ambition, under the diſguiſe of ſanctity and of zeal for the intereſts of piety and religion: An extraordinary perſonage, ſurely, had he been allowed to remain in his firſt ſtation, and had directed the vehemence of his character to the ſupport of law and juſtice; inſtead of being engaged, by the prejudices of the times, to ſacrifice all private duties and public connexions to tyes, which he imagined, or repreſented, as ſuperior to every civil and political conſideration. But no man, who enters into the genius of that age, can reaſonably doubt of this prelate's ſincerity. The ſpirit of ſuperſtition was ſo prevalent, that it infallibly caught every careleſs reaſoner, much more every one whoſe intereſt, and honour, and ambition, were engaged to ſupport it. All the wretched literature of the times was inliſted on that ſide: Some faint glimmerings of common ſenſe might ſometimes pierce through the thick cloud of ignorance, or what was worſe, the illuſions of perverted ſcience, which had blotted out the ſun, and enveloped the face of nature: But thoſe who preſerved themſelves untainted by the general contagion, proceeded on no principles which they could pretend to juſtify: They were more indebted to their total want of inſtruction, than to their knowledge, if

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Decemb. 29. Murder of Thomas a Becket.

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they ſtill retained ſome ſhare of underſtanding: Folly was poſſeſſed of all the ſchools as well as all the churches; and her votaries aſſumed the garb of philoſophers together with the enſigns of ſpiritual dignities. Throughout that large collection of letters, which bears the name of St. Thomas, we find, in all the retainers of that aſpiring prelate, no leſs than in himſelf, a moſt entire and abſolute conviction of the reaſon and piety of their own party, and a diſdain of their antagoniſts: Nor is there leſs cant and grimace in their ſtile, when they addreſs each other, than when they compoſe manifeſtos for the peruſal of the public. The ſpirit of revenge, violence, and ambition, which accompanied their conduct, inſtead of forming a preſumption of hypocriſy, are the ſureſt pledges of their ſincere attachment to a cauſe, which ſo much flattered theſe domineering paſſions.

Grief

HENRY, on the firſt report of Becket's violent meaſures, had propoſed to have him arreſted, and had already taken ſome ſteps towards the execution of that deſign: But the intelligence of his murder threw that prince into great conſternation; and he was immediately ſenſible of the dangerous conſequences, which he had reaſon to apprehend from ſo unexpected an event. An archbiſhop of reputed ſanctity, aſſaſſinated before the altar, in the exerciſe of his function, and on account of his zeal in maintaining eccleſiaſtical privileges, muſt attain the higheſt honours of martyrdom; while his murderer would be ranked among the moſt bloody tyrants, that ever were expoſed to the hatred and deteſtation of mankind. Interdicts and excommunications, weapons in themſelves ſo terrible, would, he foreſaw, be armed with double force, when employed in a cauſe ſo much calculated to work on the human paſſions, and ſo peculiarly adapted to the eloquence of popular preachers and declaimers. In vain would he plead his own innocence, and even his total ignorance

ignorance of the fact: He was sufficiently guilty, if the church thought proper to esteem him such: And his concurrence in Becket's martyrdom, becoming a religious opinion, would be received with all the implicit credit, which belonged to the most established articles of faith. These considerations gave the king the most unaffected concern; and as it was extremely his interest to clear himself from all suspicion, he took no care to conceal the depth of his affliction [k]. He shut himself up from the light of day and from all commerce with his servants: He even refused during three days all food and sustenance [l]: The courtiers, apprehending dangerous effects from his despair, were at last obliged to break in upon his solitude; and they employed every topic of consolation, induced him to accept of nourishment, and occupied his leisure in taking precautions against the consequences, which he so justly apprehended from the murder of the primate. CHAP. VIII. 1170.

1171. and submission of the king.

THE point of chief importance to Henry was to convince the pope of his innocence; or rather, to persuade him, that he would reap greater advantages from the submissions of England than from proceeding to extremities against that kingdom. The archbishop of Roüen, the bishops of Worcester and Evreux, with five persons of inferior quality, were immediately dispatched to Rome [m], and orders were given them to perform their journey with the utmost expedition. Though the name and authority of the court of Rome were so terrible in the remote countries of Europe, which were sunk in profound ignorance, and were entirely unacquainted with its character and conduct; the pope was so little revered at home that his inveterate enemies surrounded the gates of Rome itself,

[k] Ypod. Neust. p. 447. M. Paris, p. 87. Diceto, p. 556. Gervase, p. 1419. [l] Hist. Quad. p. 143. [m] Hoveden, p. 526. M. Paris, p. 87.

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and even controuled his government in that city; and the ambaſſadors, who, from a diſtant extremity of Europe, carried to him the humble, or rather abject ſubmiſſions of the greateſt potentate of the age, found the utmoſt difficulty to make their way to him, and to throw themſelves at his feet. It was at laſt agreed, that Richard Barre, one of their number, ſhould leave the reſt behind, and run all the hazards of the paſſage [n], in order to prevent the fatal conſequences which might enſue from any delay in giving ſatisfaction to his holineſs. He found on his arrival, that Alexander was already wrought up to the greateſt rage againſt the king, that Becket's partizans were daily ſtimulating him to revenge, that the king of France had exhorted him to fulminate the moſt dreadful ſentence againſt England, and that the very mention of Henry's name before the ſacred college was received with every expreſſion of horror and execration. The Thurſday before Eaſter was now approaching, when it is cuſtomary for the pope to denounce annual curſes againſt all his enemies; and it was expected, that Henry ſhould, with all the preparations peculiar to the diſcharge of that ſacred artillery, be ſolemnly comprehended in the number. But Barre found means to appeaſe the pontiff, and to deter him from a meaſure which, if it failed of ſucceſs, could not afterwards be eaſily recalled: The anathemas were only levelled in general againſt all the actors, accomplices, and abettors of Becket's murder. The abbot of Valaſſe, and the archdeacons of Saliſbury and Liſieux, with others of Henry's miniſters, who ſoon after arrived, beſides aſſerting their prince's innocence, made oath before the whole conſiſtory, that he would ſtand to the pope's judgment in the affair, and make every ſubmiſſion, that ſhould be required of him. The terrible blow was thus artfully eluded; the cardinals Albert and Theodin

[n] Hoveden, p. 526. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 863.

were

were appointed legates to examine the cauſe, and were ordered to proceed to Normandy for that purpoſe; and though Henry's foreign dominions were already laid under an interdict by the archbiſhop of Sens, Becket's great partizan, and the pope's legate in France, the general expectation, that the monarch would eaſily exculpate himſelf from any concurrence in the guilt, kept every one in ſuſpence, and prevented all the bad conſequences, which might be dreaded from that ſentence. CHAP. VIII. 1171.

THE clergy, mean while, though their rage was happily diverted from falling on the king, were not idle in magnifying the ſanctity of Becket; in extolling the merits of his martyrdom; and in exalting him above all that devoted tribe, who, in ſeveral ages, had, by their blood, cemented the fabric of the temple. Other ſaints had only borne teſtimony in their ſufferings to the general doctrines of Chriſtianity; but Becket had ſacrificed his life to the power and privileges of the clergy; and this peculiar merit challenged, and not in vain, a ſuitable acknowledgment to his memory. Endleſs were the panegyrics on his virtues; and the miracles, wrought by his reliques, were more numerous, more nonſenſical, and more impudently atteſted, than thoſe which ever filled the legend of any confeſſor or martyr. Two years after his death he was canonized by pope Alexander; a ſolemn jubilee was eſtabliſhed for celebrating his merits; his body was removed to a magnificent ſhrine, enriched with preſents from all parts of Chriſtendom; pilgrimages were performed to obtain his interceſſion with heaven; and it was computed, that, in one year, above a hundred thouſand pilgrims arrived in Canterbury, and paid their devotions at his tomb. It is indeed a mortifying reflection to thoſe who are actuated by the love of fame, ſo juſtly denominated the laſt infirmity of noble minds, that the wiſeſt legiſlator and moſt exalted genius, that ever re-

CHAP. VIII. 1171.

formed or enlightened the world, can never expect such tributes of praise, as are lavished on the memory of pretended saints, whose whole conduct was probably, to the last degree, odious or contemptible, and whose industry was entirely directed to the pursuit of objects pernicious to mankind. It is only a conqueror, a personage no less intitled to our hatred, who can pretend to the attainment of equal renown and glory.

It may not be amiss to remark, before we conclude this subject of Thomas a Becket, that the king, during his controversy with that prelate, was on every occasion more anxious than usual to express his zeal for religion, and to avoid all appearance of a profane negligence on that head. He gave his consent to the imposing of a tax on all his dominions for the delivery of the holy land, now threatened by the famous Saladine: This tax amounted to two-pence a pound for one year, and a penny a pound for the four subsequent [o]. Almost all the princes of Europe laid a like imposition on their subjects, which received the name of Saladine's tax. During this period, there came over from Germany about thirty heretics of both sexes, under the direction of one Gerard; simple ignorant people, who could give no account of their faith, but declared themselves ready to suffer for the tenets of their master. They made only one convert in England, a woman as ignorant as themselves; yet they gave such umbrage to the clergy, that they were delivered over to the secular arm, and were punished by being burned on the forehead, and then whipped through the streets. They seemed to exult in their sufferings, and as they went along, sung the beatitude, *Blessed are ye, when men hate you and persecute you* [p]. After they were whipped, they were thrust out almost naked in the midst of winter,

[o] Chron. Gervase, p. 1399. M. Paris, p. 74. [p] Neubr. p. 391. M. Paris, p. 74. Heming, p. 494.

and

and perifhed through cold and hunger; no one daring, or being willing, to give them the leaft relief. We are ignorant of the particular principles of thefe people: For it would be imprudent to rely on the repreſentations left of them by the clergy, who affirm, that they denied the efficacy of the ſacraments, and the unity of the church. It is probable, that their departure from the ſtandard of orthodoxy was ſtill more ſubtile and minute. They ſeem to have been the firſt that ever ſuffered for hereſy in England. CHAP. VIII. 1171.

As ſoon as Henry found, that he was in no immediate danger from the thunders of the vatican, he undertook an expedition againſt Ireland; a deſign, which he had long projected, and by which he hoped to recover his credit, ſomewhat impaired by his late tranſactions with the hierarchy.

CHAP. IX.

HENRY II.

State of Ireland——Conqueſt of that iſland——The king's accommodation with the court of Rome——Revolt of young Henry and his brothers——Wars and inſurrections——War with Scotland——Pennance of Henry for Becket's murder——William, king of Scotland, defeated and taken priſoner——The king's accommodation with his ſons——The king's equitable adminiſtration——Cruſades——Revolt of prince Richard——Death and character of Henry——Miſcellaneous tranſactions of his reign.

CHAP. IX.

1172. State of Ireland.

AS Britain was firſt peopled from Gaul, ſo was Ireland probably from Britain; and the inhabitants of all theſe countries ſeem to have been ſo many tribes of the Celtæ, who derive their origin from an antiquity, that lies far beyond the records of any hiſtory or tradition. The Iriſh, from the beginning of time, had been buried in the moſt profound barbariſm and ignorance; and as they were never conquered or even invaded by the Romans, from whom all the weſtern world derived its civility, they continued ſtill in the moſt rude ſtate of ſociety, and were diſtinguiſhed by thoſe vices alone, to which human nature, not tamed by education or reſtrained by laws, is for ever ſubject. The ſmall principalities, into which they were divided, exerciſed perpetual rapine and violence againſt each other; the uncertain ſucceſſion of their princes was a continual ſource of domeſtic convulſions; the uſual title of each petty ſovereign

vereign was the murder of his predeceſſor; courage and force, though exerciſed in the commiſſion of crimes, were more honoured than any pacific virtues; and the moſt ſimple arts of life, even tillage and agriculture, were almoſt wholly unknown among them. They had felt the invaſions of the Danes and the other northern tribes; but theſe inroads, which had ſpread barbariſm in other parts of Europe, tended rather to improve the Iriſh; and the only towns, which were to be found in the iſland, had been planted along the coaſt by the freebooters of Norway and Denmark. The other inhabitants exerciſed paſturage in the open country; ſought protection from any danger in their foreſts and moraſſes; and being divided by the fierceſt animoſities againſt each other, were ſtill more intent on the means of mutual injury, than on the expedients for common or even for private intereſt.

CHAP. IX. 1172.

Besides many ſmall tribes, there were in the age of Henry II. five principal ſovereignties in the iſland, Munſter, Leinſter, Meath, Ulſter, and Connaught; and as it had been uſual for the one or the other of theſe to take the lead in their wars, there was commonly ſome prince, who ſeemed, for the time, to act as monarch of Ireland. Roderic O Connor, king of Connaught was then advanced to this dignity [a]; but his government, ill obeyed even within his own territory, was not able to unite the people in any meaſures, either for the eſtabliſhment of order, or for defence againſt foreigners. The ambition of Henry had, very early in his reign, been moved, by the proſpect of theſe advantages, to attempt the ſubjection of Ireland; and a pretence was only wanting to invade a people, who, being always confined to their own iſland, had never given any reaſon of complaint to any of their neighbours. For this purpoſe, he had re-

[a] Hoveden, p. 527.

courſe

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course to Rome, which assumed a right to dispose of kingdoms and empires; and not foreseeing the dangerous disputes, which he was one day to maintain with that see, he helped, for present, or rather for an imaginary, convenience, to give sanction to claims which were now become dangerous to all sovereigns. Adrian III. who then filled the papal chair, was by birth an Englishman; and being, on that account, the more disposed to oblige Henry, he was easily persuaded to act as master of the world, and to make, without any hazard or expence, the acquisition of a great island to his spiritual jurisdiction. The Irish had, by precedent missions from the Britons, been imperfectly converted to Christianity; and, what the pope regarded as the surest mark of their imperfect conversion, they followed the doctrines of their first teachers, and had never acknowledged any subjection to the see of Rome. Adrian, therefore, in the year 1156, issued a bull in favour of Henry; in which, after premising, that this prince had ever shown an anxious care to enlarge the church of God on earth, and to encrease the number of his saints and elect in heaven; he represents his design of subduing Ireland as derived from the same pious motives: He considers his care of previously applying for the apostolic sanction as a sure earnest of success and victory; and having established it as a point incontestible, that all Christian kingdoms belong to the patrimony of St. Peter, he acknowledges it to be his own duty to sow among them the seeds of the gospel, which might in the last day fructify to their eternal salvation: He exhorts the king to invade Ireland, in order to extirpate the vice and wickedness of the natives, and oblige them to pay yearly, from every house, a penny to the see of Rome: He gives him entire right and authority over the island, commands all the inhabitants to obey him as their sovereign, and invests with full power all such godly instruments as he should think

think proper to employ in an enterprize, thus calculated for the glory of God and the salvation of the souls of men [r]. Henry, though armed with this authority, did not immediately put his design in execution; but being detained by more interesting business on the continent, waited for a favourable opportunity of invading Ireland. CHAP. IX. 1174.

Dermot Macmorrogh, king of Leinster, had, by his licentious tyranny, rendered himself extremely odious to his subjects, who seized with alacrity the first occasion that offered, of throwing off the yoke, which was become grievous and oppressive to them. This prince had formed a design on Omach, wife of Ororic, king of Meath; and taking advantage of her husband's absence, who, being obliged to visit a distant part of his dominions, had left his queen secure, as he thought, in an island, surrounded by a bog, he suddenly invaded the place, and carried off the princess [s]. This exploit, though usual among the Irish, and rather deemed a proof of gallantry and spirit [t], provoked the resentment of the husband; who, having collected forces and being strengthened by the alliance of Roderic, king of Connaught, invaded the dominions of Dermot, and expelled him his kingdom. The exiled prince had recourse to Henry, who was at this time in Guienne, craved his assistance in restoring him to his sovereignty, and offered, on that event, to hold his kingdom in vassalage under the crown of England. Henry, whose views were already turned towards making acquisitions in Ireland, readily accepted the offer; but being at that time embarrassed by the rebellions of his French subjects, as well as by his disputes with the see of Rome, he declined, for the present, embarking in the enterprize, and gave Dermot no farther assistance than letters patent, by which he empowered all his subjects to aid the Irish

[r] M. Paris, p. 67. Girald. Cambr. Spelm. Concil. vol. ii. p. 51. Rymer, vol. i. p. 15. [s] Girald. Cambr. p. 760. [t] Spencer, vol. vi.

prince

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1172. prince in the recovery of his dominions [u]. Dermot supported by this authority, came to Briſtol; and after endeavouring, though for ſome time in vain, to engage adventurers in the enterprize, he at laſt formed a treaty with Richard, ſirnamed Strongbow, earl of Strigul. This nobleman, who was of the illuſtrious houſe of Clare, had impaired his fortune by expenſive pleaſures; and being ready for any deſperate undertaking, he promiſed aſſiſtance to Dermot, on condition that he ſhould eſpouſe Eva, daughter of that prince, and be declared heir to all his dominions [w]. While Richard was aſſembling his ſuccours, Dermot went into Wales; and meeting with Robert Fitz-Stephens, conſtable of Abertivi, and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, he alſo engaged them in his ſervice, and obtained their promiſe of invading Ireland. Being now aſſured of ſuccour, he returned privately to his own ſtate; and lurking in the monaſtery of Fernes, which he had founded, (for this ruffian was alſo a founder of monaſteries) he prepared every thing for the reception of his Engliſh allies [x].

Conqueſt of that iſland.

THE troops of Fitz-Stephens were firſt ready. That gentleman landed in Ireland with an hundred and thirty knights, ſixty eſquires, and three hundred archers; but this ſmall body, being brave men, not unacquainted with diſcipline, and compleatly armed, a thing almoſt unknown in Ireland, ſtruck a great terror into the barbarous inhabitants, and ſeemed to menace them with ſome ſignal revolution. The conjunction of Maurice de Prendergaſt, who, about the ſame time, brought over ten knights and ſixty archers, enabled Fitz-Stephens to attempt the ſiege of Wexford, a town inhabited by the Danes; and after gaining a battle, he made himſelf maſter of the place [y]. Soon after, Fitz-Gerald arrived with ten knights, thirty

[u] Girald. Cambr. p. 760.
[w] Ibid. p. 761.
[x] Ibid. p. 761.
[y] Ibid. p. 761, 762.

eſquires,

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esquires, and a hundred archers [z]; and being joined by the former adventurers, composed a force which nothing in Ireland was able to withstand. Roderic, the chief monarch of the island, was defeated in battle; the prince of Ossory was obliged to submit, and give hostages for his peaceable behaviour; and Dermot, not content with being restored to his kingdom of Leinster, projected the dethroning of Roderic, and aspired to the sole dominion over the Irish.

In prosecution of these views, he sent over a messenger to the earl of Strigul, challenging the performance of his promise, and displaying the mighty advantages which might now be reaped by a small reinforcement of warlike troops from England. Richard, not satisfied with the general allowance given by Henry to all his subjects, went to that prince, then in Normandy; and having obtained a cold or ambiguous permission, prepared himself for the execution of his designs. He first sent over Raymond, one of his retinue, with ten knights and seventy archers, who, landing near Waterford, defeated a body of three thousand Irish, that had ventured to attack him [a]; and as Richard himself, who brought over two hundred horse, and a hundred archers, joined, a few days after, the victorious English, they made themselves masters of Waterford, and proceeded to Dublin, which was taken by assault. Roderic, in revenge, cut off the head of Dermot's son, who had been left as an hostage in his hands; and Richard, marrying Eva, became soon after, by the death of Dermot, master of the kingdom of Leinster, and prepared to extend his authority over all Ireland. Roderic, and the other Irish princes, were alarmed at the danger; and combining together, besieged Dublin with an army of thirty thousand men: But earl Richard, making a sudden sally at the head of ninety knights, with

[z] Girald. Cambr. p. 766.

[a] Ibid. p. 767.

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1172. their followers, put this numerous army to rout, chaced them from the field of battle, and purſued them with great ſlaughter. None in Ireland now dared to oppoſe themſelves to the Engliſh [b].

HENRY, jealous of the progreſs, made by his own ſubjects, ſent orders to recall all the Engliſh, and he made preparations to attack Ireland in perſon [c]: But Richard, and the other adventurers, found means to appeaſe him, by making him the moſt humble ſubmiſſions, and offering to hold all their acquiſitions in vaſſalage to his crown [d]. That monarch landed in Ireland at the head of five hundred knights, beſides other ſoldiers: He found the Iriſh ſo diſpirited by their late misfortunes, that, in a progreſs which he made through the iſland, he had no other occupation than to receive the homages of his new ſubjects. He left moſt of the Iriſh chieftains or princes in poſſeſſion of their antient territories; beſtowed ſome lands on the Engliſh adventurers; gave earl Richard the commiſſion of ſeneſchal of Ireland; and after a ſtay of a few months, returned in triumph to England. By theſe trivial exploits, ſcarcely worth relating, except for the importance of the conſequences, was Ireland ſubdued, and annexed to the Engliſh crown.

THE low ſtate of commerce and induſtry, during thoſe ages, made it impracticable for princes to ſupport regular armies, which might retain a conquered country in ſubjection; and the extreme barbariſm and poverty of Ireland could ſtill leſs afford means of bearing this expence. The only expedient, by which a durable conqueſt could then be made or maintained, was by pouring in a multitude of new inhabitants, dividing among them the lands of the vanquiſhed, eſtabliſhing them in all offices of truſt and authority, and thereby transforming the antient inhabitants into a new people. By this policy, the northern

[b] Girald. Cambr. p. 773. [c] Ibid. p. 770. [d] Ibid. p 775.

invaders

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invaders of old, and of late the duke of Normandy, had been able to fix their dominion, and to erect kingdoms, which remained ſtable on their foundations, and were tranſmitted to the poſterity of the firſt conquerors. But the ſtate of Ireland rendered that iſland ſo little inviting to the Engliſh, that only a few of deſperate fortunes could be perſuaded, from time to time, to tranſport themſelves into it [e]; and inſtead of reclaiming the natives from their uncultivated manners, they were gradually aſſimilated to the antient inhabitants, and degenerated from the cuſtoms of their own nation. It was alſo found requiſite to beſtow great military and arbitrary powers on the leaders, who commanded a handful of men amidſt ſuch hoſtile multitudes; and law and equity, in a little time, became as much unknown in the Engliſh ſettlements as they had ever been among the Iriſh tribes. Palatinates were erected in favour of the new adventurers; independant authority conferred; the natives, never fully ſubdued, ſtill retained their animoſities againſt the conquerors; their hatred was retaliated by like injuries; and from theſe cauſes, the Iriſh, during the courſe of four centuries, remained ſtill ſavage and untractable: It was not till the later end of Elizabeth's reign, that the iſland was fully ſubdued; nor till that of her ſucceſſor, that it gave hopes of becoming a uſeful conqueſt to the Engliſh nation.

Besides that the eaſy and peaceable ſubmiſſion of the Iriſh left Henry no farther occupation in that iſland, he was recalled from it by another incident, which was of the laſt importance to his intereſts and ſafety. The two legates, Albert and Theodin, to whom was committed the trial of his conduct in the murder of archbiſhop Becket, were arrived in Normandy; and being impatient of delay, ſent him frequent letters, full of menaces, if he protracted any longer making his appearance before

[e] Brompton, p. 1069. Neubrig. p. 403.

them.

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them [f]. He haſtened therefore to Normandy, and had a conference with them at Savigny, where their demands were ſo exorbitant, that he broke off the negotiation, threatened to return to Ireland, and bade them do their worſt againſt him. They perceived that the ſeaſon was now paſt for taking advantage of that tragical incident; which, had it been hotly purſued by interdicts and excommunications, was capable of throwing the whole kingdom into combuſtion. But the time, which Henry had happily gained, had contributed to appeaſe the minds of men: The event could not now have the ſame influence, as when it was recent; and as the clergy every day looked for an accommodation with the king, they had not oppoſed the pretenſions of his partizans, who had been very induſtrious in repreſenting to the people his entire innocence in the murder of the primate, and his ignorance of the deſigns formed by the aſſaſſins. The legates, therefore, found themſelves obliged to lower their terms; and Henry was ſo fortunate as to conclude an accommodation with them. He declared upon oath, before the reliques of the ſaints, that, ſo far from commanding or deſiring the death of the archbiſhop, he was extremely grieved when he received intelligence of it: But as the paſſion, which he had expreſſed on account of that prelate's conduct, had probably been the occaſion of his murder, he ſtipulated the following conditions, as an atonement for the offence. He promiſed, that he ſhould pardon all ſuch as had been baniſhed for adhering to Becket, and ſhould reſtore them to their livings; that the ſee of Canterbury ſhould be reinſtated in all its antient poſſeſſions; that he ſhould pay the templars a ſum of money ſufficient for the ſubſiſtance of two hundred knights during a year in the holy land; that he ſhould himſelf take the croſs at the Chriſtmas following, and,

The king's accommodation with the court of Rome.

[f] Girald. Cambr. p. 778.

if

if the pope required it, ſerve three years againſt the infidels, either in Spain or Paleſtine; that he ſhould not inſiſt on the obſervance of ſuch cuſtoms, derogatory to eccleſiaſtical privileges, as had been introduced in his own time; and that he ſhould not obſtruct appeals to the pope in eccleſiaſtical cauſes, but ſhould content himſelf with exacting ſufficient ſecurity from ſuch clergymen as left his dominions to proſecute an appeal, that they ſhould attempt nothing againſt the rights of his crown [g]. Upon ſigning theſe conceſſions, Henry received abſolution from the legates; and was confirmed in the grant of Ireland made by pope Adrian [h]. Nothing proves more ſtrongly the great abilities of this monarch, than his extricating himſelf, on ſuch eaſy terms, from ſo difficult a ſituation. He had always inſiſted, that the laws, eſtabliſhed at Clarendon, contained not any new claims, but the antient cuſtoms of the kingdom; and he was ſtill at liberty, notwithſtanding the articles of this agreement, to maintain his pretenſions. Appeals to the pope were indeed permitted by that treaty; but as the king was alſo permitted to exact reaſonable ſecurities from the parties, and might ſtretch his demands on this head as far as he pleaſed, he had it virtually in his power to prevent the pope from reaping any advantage by this ſeeming conceſſion. And on the whole, the conſtitutions of Clarendon remained ſtill the law of the realm; though the pope and his legates ſeem ſo little to have conceived the king's power to lie under any legal limitations, that they were ſatisfied with his departing, by treaty, from one of the moſt momentous articles of theſe conſtitutions, without requiring any repeal by the ſtates of the kingdom.

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HENRY, freed from this dangerous controverſy with the eccleſiaſtics and with the ſee of Rome, ſeemed now

[g] M. Paris, p. 33. Benedict. Abb. p. 34. Hoveden, p. 529. Diceto, p. 560. Chron. Gerv. p. 1422. [h] Brompton, p. 1071. Liber Nig. Scac. p. 47.

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to have reached the pinnacle of human grandeur and felicity, and to be equally happy in his domeſtic ſituation and in his political government. A numerous progeny of ſons and daughters gave both luſtre and authority to his crown, prevented the dangers of a diſputed ſucceſſion, and repreſſed all pretenſions of the ambitious barons. The king's precaution alſo, in eſtabliſhing the ſeveral branches of his family, ſeemed well calculated to prevent all jealouſy among the brothers, and to perpetuate the greatneſs of his family. He had appointed Henry, his eldeſt ſon, to be his ſucceſſor in the kingdom of England, the dutchy of Normandy, and the counties of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine; territories which lay contiguous, and which, by that means, might eaſily lend to each other mutual aſſiſtance, both againſt inteſtine commotions and foreign invaſions. Richard, his ſecond ſon, was inveſted in the dutchy of Guienne and county of Poictou; Geoffrey, his third ſon, inherited, in right of his wife, the dutchy of Britanny; and the new conqueſt of Ireland was deſtined for the appanage of John, his fourth ſon. He had alſo negotiated, in favour of this laſt prince, a marriage with Adelais, the only daughter of Humbert, count of Savoy and Maurienne; and was to receive as her dowry conſiderable demeſnes in Piedmont, Savoy, Breſſe, and Dauphiny [i]. But this exaltation of his family excited the jealouſy and envy of all his neighbours, who made thoſe very ſons, whoſe fortunes he had ſo anxiouſly eſtabliſhed, the means of imbittering his future life and diſturbing his government.

YOUNG Henry, who was riſing to man's eſtate, began to diſplay his character, and aſpire to independance: Brave, ambitious, liberal, munificent, affable; he diſcovered qualities, which give great luſtre to youth; prognoſti-

[i] Ypod. Neuſt. p. 448. Bened. Abb. p. 38. Hovedes, p. 532. Diceto, p. 562. Brompton, p. 1082. Rymer, vol. i. p. 33.

cate

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cate a shining fortune; but, unless tempered in mature age with discretion, are the forerunners of the greatest calamities [k]. It is said, that at the time when this prince received the royal unction, his father, in order to give greater dignity to the ceremony, officiated at table as one of the retinue; and observed to his son, that never king was more royally served. *It is nothing extraordinary*, said young Henry to one of his courtiers, *if the son of a count should serve the son of a king.* This saying, which might pass only for an innocent pleasantry, or even for an oblique compliment to his father, was however regarded as a symptom of his aspiring temper; and his conduct soon after justified the conjecture. 1172.

HENRY, agreeably to the promise which he had given both to the pope and French king, permitted his son to be crowned anew by the hands of the archbishop of Roüen, and associated the princess Margaret, spouse to young Henry, in this ceremony [l]. He afterwards allowed him to pay a visit to his father-in-law at Paris, who took the opportunity of instilling into the young prince those ambitious sentiments, to which he was naturally but too much inclined [m]. Though it had been the constant practice of France, ever since the accession of the Capetian line, to crown the son during the life-time of the father, without conferring on him any present participation of royalty; Lewis persuaded his son-in-law, that, by this ceremony, which in those ages was deemed so important, he had acquired a title to sovereignty, and that the king could not, without injustice, exclude him from immediate possession of the whole, or at least a part 1173. Revolt of young Henry and his brothers.

[k] Chron. Gerv. p. 1463. [l] Hoveden, p. 529. Diceto, p. 560. Brompton, p. 1080. Chron. Gerv. p. 1421. Trivet, p. 58. It appears from Madox's History of the Exchequer, that silk garments were then known in England, and that the coronation robes of the young king and queen cost eighty-seven pounds ten shillings and four pence, money of that age.

[m] Girald. Cambr. p. 782.

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1173. of his dominions. In conſequence of theſe extravagant ideas, young Henry, on his return, deſired the king to reſign to him either the crown of England or the dutchy of Normandy; diſcovered great diſcontent on the refuſal; ſpake in the moſt undutiful terms of his father; and ſoon after, in concert with Lewis, made his eſcape to Paris, where he was protected and ſupported by that monarch.

WHILE Henry was alarmed at this event, and had the proſpect of dangerous intrigues, or even of a war, which, whether ſucceſsful or not, muſt be extremely calamitous and diſagreeable to him, he received intelligence of new misfortunes, which muſt have affected him in the moſt ſenſible manner. Queen Eleanor, who had diſguſted her firſt huſband by her gallantries, was no leſs offenſive to her ſecond, by her jealouſy; and after this manner, carried to extremity, in the different periods of her life, every circumſtance of female weakneſs. She communicated her diſcontents againſt Henry to her two younger ſons, Geoffrey and Richard, perſuaded them that they were alſo entitled to preſent poſſeſſion of the territories aſſigned to them; engaged them to fly ſecretly to the court of France; and was meditating, herſelf, an eſcape to the ſame court, and had even put on man's apparel for that purpoſe; when ſhe was ſeized by orders from her huſband, and thrown into confinement. Thus, Europe ſaw with aſtoniſhment the beſt and moſt indulgent of parents at war with his whole family; three boys, ſcarcely arrived at the age of puberty, require a great monarch, in the full vigour of his age and height of his reputation, to dethrone himſelf in their favour; and ſeveral princes not aſhamed to ſupport them in theſe unnatural and abſurd pretenſions.

HENRY, reduced to this perilous and diſagreeable ſituation, had recourſe to the court of Rome: Though ſenſible of the danger attending the interpoſition of eccleſiaſtical authority in temporal diſputes, he applied to the

the pope, as his ſuperior lord, to excommunicate his enemies, and by theſe cenſures to reduce to obedience his undutiful children, whom he found ſuch a reluctance to puniſh by the ſword of the magiſtrate [n]. Alexander, well pleaſed to exert his power in ſo juſtifiable a cauſe, iſſued the bulls required of him: But it was ſoon found, that theſe ſpiritual weapons had not the ſame force as when employed in a ſpiritual controverſy; and that the clergy were very negligent in ſupporting a ſentence, which was nowiſe calculated to promote the immediate intereſts of their order. The king, after taking in vain this humiliating ſtep, was obliged to have recourſe to arms, and to inliſt ſuch auxiliaries, as are the uſual reſource of tyrants, and have ſeldom been employed by ſo wiſe and juſt a monarch.

CHAP. IX. 1173.

THE looſe government which prevailed in all the ſtates of Europe, the many private wars carried on among the neighbouring nobles, and the impoſſibility of enforcing any general execution of the laws, had encouraged a tribe of banditti to diſturb every where the public peace, to infeſt the highways, to pillage the open country, and to brave all the efforts of the civil magiſtrate, and even the excommunications of the church, which were fulminated againſt them [o]. Troops of them were ſometimes inliſted in the ſervice of one prince or baron, ſometimes in that of another: They often acted in an independant manner, under leaders of their own: The peaceable and induſtrious inhabitants, reduced to poverty by their ravages, were frequently obliged for ſubſiſtence to betake themſelves to a like diſorderly courſe of life: And a continual inteſtine war, pernicious to induſtry, as well as to the

[n] Epiſt. Petri Bleſ. epiſt. 136. in Bibl. Patr. tom. xxiv. p. 1048. His words are, *Veſtræ juriſdictionis eſt regnum Angliæ, et quantum ad feudatarii juris obligationem, vobis duntaxat obnoxius teneor.* The ſame ſtrange paper is in Rymer, vol. i. p. 35. and Trivet, vol. i. p. 62.

[o] Neubrig. p. 413.

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1173.

execution of juſtice, was thus carried on in the bowels of every kingdom [p]. Thoſe deſperate ruffians received the name ſometimes of Brabançons, ſometimes of Routiers or Cottereaux; but for what reaſon, is not agreed by hiſtorians: And they formed a kind of ſociety or government among themſelves, which ſet at defiance the reſt of mankind. The greateſt monarchs were not aſhamed, on occaſion, to have recourſe to their aſſiſtance; and as their habits of war and depredation had given them experience, hardineſs, and courage, they generally compoſed the moſt formidable part of thoſe armies, which decided the political quarrels of princes. Several of them were enliſted among the forces levied by Henry's enemies [q]; but the great treaſures amaſſed by that prince enabled him to engage more numerous troops of them in his ſervice; and the ſituation of his affairs rendered even ſuch banditti the only forces on whoſe fidelity he could repoſe any confidence. His licentious barons, diſguſted with a vigilant government, were more deſirous of being ruled by young princes, ignorant of public affairs, remiſs in their conduct, and profuſe in their grants [r]; and as the king had enſured to his ſons the ſucceſſion to every particular province of his dominions, the nobles dreaded no danger in adhering to thoſe who, they knew, muſt ſome time become their ſovereigns. Prompted by theſe motives, many of the Norman nobility had deſerted to his ſon Henry; the Breton and Gaſcon barons ſeemed equally diſpoſed to embrace the quarrel of Geoffrey and Richard. Diſaffection had creeped in among the Engliſh; and the earls of Leiceſter and Cheſter in particular had openly declared againſt the king. Twenty thouſand Brabançons, therefore, joined to ſome troops, which he brought over from Ireland, and a few barons of approved fidelity, formed

[p] Chron. Cerv. p. 1465.
[q] Pet. Bleſ. epiſt. 47.
[r] Diceto, p. 570.

the

the ſole force, with which he propoſed to reſiſt his ene- CHAP. IX.
mies.

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LEWIS, in order to bind the confederates in a cloſer union, ſummoned at Paris an aſſembly of the chief vaſſals of the crown, received their approbation of his meaſures, and engaged them by oath to adhere to the cauſe of young Henry. This prince, in return, bound himſelf by a like tie never to deſert his French allies; and having made a new great ſeal, he laviſhly diſtributed among them many conſiderable parts of thoſe territories, which he propoſed to conquer from his father. The counts of Flanders, Boulogne, Blois, and Eu, partly moved by the general jealouſy ariſing from Henry's power and ambition, partly allured by the proſpect of reaping advantage from the inconſiderate temper and the neceſſities of the young prince, declared openly in favour of the latter. William, king of Scotland, had alſo entered into this great confederacy; and a plan was concerted for a general invaſion on different parts of the king's extenſive and factious dominions.

HOSTILITIES were firſt commenced by the counts of Flanders and Boulogne on the frontiers of Normandy. Thoſe princes laid ſiege to Aumale, which was delivered into their hands, by the treachery of the count of that name: This nobleman ſurrendered himſelf priſoner; and, on pretence of thereby paying his ranſom, opened the gates of all his other fortreſſes. The two counts next beſieged and made themſeves maſters of Drincourt: But the count of Boulogne was here mortally wounded in the aſſault; and this event put ſome ſtop to the progreſs of the Flemiſh arms.

IN another quarter, the king of France, being ſtrongly aſſiſted by his vaſſals, aſſembled a great army of ſeven thouſand knights and their followers on horſeback, and a proportionable number of infantry: Carrying young Wars and inſurrections.

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1173. Henry along with him, he laid ſiege to Verneüil, which was vigorouſly defended by Hugh de Lacy and Hugh de Beauchamp, the governors. After he had lain a month before the place, the garriſon, being ſtraitened for proviſions, were obliged to capitulate; and they engaged, if not relieved within three days, to ſurrender the town, and to retire into the citadel. On the laſt of theſe days, Henry appeared with his army upon the heights above Verneüil. Lewis, dreading an attack, ſent the archbiſhop of Sens and the count of Blois to the Engliſh camp, and deſired that next day ſhould be appointed for a conference, in order to eſtabliſh a general peace, and terminate the difference between Henry and his ſons. The king, who paſſionately deſired this accommodation, and ſuſpected no fraud, gave his conſent; but Lewis, that morning, obliging the garriſon to ſurrender, according to the capitulation, ſet fire to the place, and began to retire with his army. Henry, provoked at this artifice, attacked the rear with vigour, put them to rout, did ſome execution, and took ſeveral priſoners. The French army, as their time of ſervice was now expired, immediately diſperſed themſelves into their ſeveral provinces; and left Henry free to proſecute his advantages againſt his other enemies.

THE nobles of Britanny, inſtigated by the earl of Cheſter and Ralph de Fougeres, were all in arms; but their progreſs was checked by a body of Brabançons, which the king, after Lewis's retreat, had ſent againſt them. The two armies came to an action near Dol; where the rebels were defeated, fifteen hundred killed on the ſpot, and the leaders, the earls of Cheſter and Fougeres, obliged to take ſhelter in the town of Dol. Henry haſtened to form the ſiege of that place, and carried on the attack with ſuch ardour, that he obliged the governor and garriſon to ſurrender themſelves priſoners of war. By theſe vigorous

vigorous measures and happy successes, the insurrections were entirely quelled in Britanny; and the king, thus fortunate in all quarters, willingly agreed to a conference with Lewis, in hopes, that his enemies, finding all their mighty efforts entirely frustrated, would agree to terminate hostilities on some moderate and reasonable conditions. CHAP. IX. 1173.

THE two monarchs met between Trie and Gisors; and Henry had here the mortification to see his three sons in the retinue of his mortal enemy. As Lewis had no other pretence for war than supporting the claims of these young princes, the king made them such offers as children might be ashamed to insist on, and could be extorted from him by nothing but his parental affection or by the present necessity of his affairs [s]. He insisted only on retaining the sovereign authority in all his dominions; but offered young Henry half the revenues of England, with some places of surety in that kingdom; or, if he rather chose to reside in Normandy, half the revenues of that dutchy, with all those of Anjou. He made a like offer to Richard in Guienne; he promised to resign Britanny to Geoffrey; and if these conceſſions were not deemed sufficient, he agreed to add to them whatever the pope's legates, who were present, should require of him [t]. The earl of Leicester was also present at this negotiation; and either from the impetuosity of his temper, or from a view of abruptly breaking off a conference which must cover the allies with confusion, he gave vent to the most violent reproaches against Henry, and he even put his hand to his sword, as if he meant to attempt some violence against him. This furious action threw the whole company into confusion, and put an end to the treaty [u].

THE chief hopes of Henry's enemies seemed now to depend on the state of affairs in England, where his au-

[s] Hoveden, p. 539.
[t] Ibid. p. 536. Brompton, p. 1088.
[u] Hoveden, p. 536.

thority

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thority was exposed to the most imminent danger. One article of prince Henry's agreement with his foreign confederates, was, that he should resign Kent, with Dover and all its other fortresses, into the hands of the count of Flanders [w]: Yet so little national or public spirit prevailed among the independant English nobility, so wholly bent were they on the aggrandizement each of himself and his own family, that, notwithstanding this pernicious concession, which must have produced the ruin of the kingdom, the majority of them had conspired to make an insurrection and to support the prince's pretensions. The king's principal resource lay in the church and the bishops, with whom he was now in perfect agreement; whether that the decency of their character made them ashamed of supporting so unnatural a rebellion, or that they were entirely satisfied with Henry's atonement for the murder of Becket and for his former invasion of ecclesiastical immunities. That prince, however, had resigned none of the essential rights of his crown in the accommodation; he maintained still the same prudent jealousy of the court of Rome; admitted no legate into England, without his swearing to attempt nothing against the royal prerogatives; and he had even obliged the monks of Canterbury, who pretended to a free election on the vacancy made by the death of Becket, to chuse Roger, prior of Dover, in the place of that turbulent prelate [x].

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War with Scotland.

THE king of Scotland made an irruption into Northumberland, and committed great devastations; but being opposed by Richard de Lucy, whom Henry had left guardian of the realm, he retreated into his own country, and agreed to a cessation of arms. This truce enabled the guardian to march southwards with his army, in order to oppose an invasion, which the earl of Leicester, at the

[w] Hoveden, p. 533. Brompton, p. 1084. Neubr. p. 508.
[x] Hoveden, p. 537.

head

head of a great body of Flemings, had made upon Suffolk. The Flemings had been joined by Hugh Bigod, who made them masters of his castle of Framingham; and marching into the heart of the kingdom, where they hoped to be supported by Leicester's vassals, they were met by Lucy, who, assisted by Humphrey Bohun, the constable, and the earls of Arundel, Gloucester, and Cornwal, had advanced to Farnham with a less numerous, but braver army, to oppose them. The Flemings, who were mostly weavers and artificers (for manufactures were now beginning to be established in Flanders) were broken in an instant, ten thousand of them were put to the sword, the earl of Leicester was taken prisoner, and the remains of the invaders were glad to compound for a safe retreat into their own country. CHAP. IX. 1173.

This great defeat did not dishearten the malcontents; who, being supported by the alliance of so many foreign princes, and encouraged by the king's own sons, determined to persevere in their enterprize. The earl of Ferrars, Roger de Moubray, Archetil de Mallory, Richard de Moreville, Hamo de Mascie, together with many friends of the earls of Leicester and Chester, rose in arms: The fidelity of the earls of Clare and Gloucester was suspected; and the guardian, though vigorously supported by Geoffrey, bishop of Lincoln, the king's natural son by the fair Rosamond, found it difficult to defend himself on all quarters, from so many open and concealed enemies. The more to augment the confusion, the king of Scotland, on the expiration of the truce, broke into the northern provinces with a great army [y] of 80,000 men; which, though undisciplined and disorderly, and better adapted for committing devastation, than for executing any military enterprize, was become dangerous from the 1174.

[y] Heming, p. 501.

present

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1174. preſent factious and turbulent ſpirit of the kingdom. Henry, who had baffled all his enemies in France, and had put his frontiers in a poſture of defence, now found England the ſeat of danger; and he determined by his preſence to overawe the malcontents, or by his conduct and courage to ſubdue them. He landed at Southampton; and knowing the influence of ſuperſtition over the minds of the people, he immediately haſtened to Canterbury, in order to make atonement to the aſhes of Thomas a Becket, and tender his ſubmiſſions to a dead enemy. So ſoon as he came within ſight of the church of Canterbury, he diſmounted, walked barefoot towards it, proſtrated himſelf before the ſhrine of the ſaint, remained in faſting and prayer during a whole day, and watched all night the holy reliques: Not content with this hypocritical devotion towards a man, whoſe violence and ingratitude had ſo long diſquieted his government, and had been the object of his moſt inveterate animoſity, he ſubmitted to a penance, ſtill more ſingular and humiliating. He aſſembled a chapter of the monks, diſrobed himſelf before them, put a ſcourge of diſcipline into the hands of each, and preſented his bare ſhoulders to the laſhes which theſe eccleſiaſtics ſucceſſively inflicted upon him. Next day, he received abſolution; and departing for London, got ſoon after the agreeable intelligence of a great victory which his generals had obtained over the Scots, and which, being gained on the very day of his abſolution, was regarded as the earneſt of his final reconciliation with Heaven and with Thomas a Becket.

8th July. Penance of Henry for Becket's murder.

WILLIAM, king of Scots, though repulſed before the caſtle of Prudhow, and other fortified places, had committed the moſt horrible depredations upon the northern provinces: But on the approach of Ralph de Glanville, the famous juſticiary, ſeconded by Bernard de Baliol, Robert de Stuteville, Odonel de Umfreville, William de Veſci,

Veſci, and other northern barons, together with the gallant biſhop of Lincoln, he thought proper to retreat nearer his own country, and he fixed his camp at Alnwic. He had here weakened his army extremely, by ſending out numerous detachments in order to extend his ravages; and he lay abſolutely ſafe, as he imagined, from any attack of the enemy. But Glanville, informed of his ſituation, made a haſty and fatiguing march to Newcaſtle; and allowing his ſoldiers only a ſmall interval for refreſhment, he immediately ſet out towards evening for Alnwic. He marched that night above thirty miles; arrived in the morning, under cover of a miſt, near the Scottiſh camp; and regardleſs of the great numbers of the enemy, he began the attack with his ſmall, but determined, body of cavalry. William was living in ſuch ſupine ſecurity, that he took the Engliſh at firſt for a body of his own ravagers, who were returning to the camp: But the ſight of their banners convincing him of his miſtake, he entered on the action with no greater body than a hundred horſe, in confidence, that the numerous army, which ſurrounded him, would ſoon haſten to his relief. He was diſmounted on the firſt ſhock, and taken priſoner; while his troops, hearing of this diſaſter, fled on all ſides with the utmoſt precipitation. The diſperſed ravagers made the beſt of their way to their own country; and diſcord ariſing among them, they proceeded even to mutual hoſtilities, and ſuffered more from each other's ſword than from that of the enemy.

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13th July.

William, king of Scotland, defeated and taken priſoner.

This great and important victory proved at laſt deciſive in favour of Henry, and broke entirely the ſpirit of the Engliſh rebels. The biſhop of Durham, who was preparing to revolt, made his ſubmiſſions; Hugh Bigod, though he had received a ſtrong reinforcement of Flemings, was obliged to ſurrender all his caſtles, and throw himſelf on the king's mercy; no better reſource was left

to

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to the earl of Ferrars and Roger de Moubray; the inferior rebels imitating the example, all England was reſtored to tranquillity in a few weeks; and as the king appeared to lie under the immediate protection of Heaven, it was deemed impious any longer to reſiſt him. The clergy exalted anew the merits and powerful interceſſion of Becket; and Henry, inſtead of oppoſing this ſuperſtition, plumed himſelf on the new friendſhip of that ſaint, and propagated an opinion which was ſo favourable to his intereſts [z].

PRINCE Henry, who was ready to embark at Gravelines with the earl of Flanders and a great army, hearing that his partizans in England were ſuppreſſed, abandoned all thoughts of the enterprize, and joined the camp of Lewis, who, during the abſence of the king, had made an irruption into Normandy, and had laid ſiege to Roüen [a]. The place was defended with great vigour by the inhabitants [b]; and Lewis, deſpairing of ſucceſs by open force, tried to gain the town by a ſtratagem, which, in that ſuperſtitious age, was deemed not very honourable. He proclaimed in his own camp a ceſſation of arms, on pretence of celebrating the feſtival of St. Laurence; and when the citizens, ſuppoſing themſelves in ſafety, were ſo imprudent as to remit their guard, he propoſed to take advantage of their ſecurity. Happily, ſome prieſts had, from mere curioſity, mounted a ſteeple, where the alarm-bell hung; and obſerving the French camp in motion, they immediately rang the bell, and gave warning to the inhabitants, who ran to their ſeveral ſtations. The French, who, on hearing the alarm, hurried to the aſſault, had already mounted the walls in ſeveral places; but being repulſed by the enraged citizens, were obliged to retreat with conſiderable loſs [c].

z Hoveden, p. 539. a Brompton, p. 1096. b Diceto, p. 578. c Brompton, p. 1096. Neubrig. p. 411. Heming. p. 503.

CHAP. IX. 1174.

Next day, Henry, who had haſtened to the defence of his Norman dominions, paſſed over the bridge in triumph; and entered Roüen in ſight of the French army. The city was now in abſolute ſafety; and the king, in order to brave the French monarch, commanded the gates, which had been walled up, to be opened; and he prepared to puſh his advantages againſt the enemy. Lewis ſaved himſelf from this perilous ſituation by a new piece of deceit, not ſo juſtifiable. He propoſed a conference for adjuſting the terms of a general peace, which, he knew, would be greedily embraced by Henry; and while the king of England truſted to the execution of his promiſe, he made a retreat with his army into France.

THERE was, however, a neceſſity on both ſides for an accommodation. Henry could no longer bear to ſee his three ſons in the hands of his enemy; and Lewis dreaded, leſt this great monarch, victorious in all quarters, crowned with glory, and abſolute maſter of his dominions, might take revenge for the many dangers and diſquietudes, which the arms, and ſtill more the intrigues of France, had, in his diſputes both with Becket and his ſons, found means to raiſe him. After making a ceſſation of arms, a conference was agreed on near Tours; where Henry granted his ſons much leſs advantageous terms than he had formerly offered; and he received their ſubmiſſions. The moſt material of his conceſſions were ſome penſions which he ſtipulated to pay them, and ſome caſtles which he granted them for the place of their reſidence; together with an indemnity for all their adherents, who were reſtored to their eſtates and honours [d]. The king's accommodation with his ſons.

OF all thoſe who had embraced the cauſe of the young princes, William king of Scotland, was the only conſiderable loſer, by that invidious and unjuſt enterprize.

[d] Rymer, vol. i. p. 35. Bened. Abb. p 38. Hoveden, p. 540. Diceto, p. 583. Brompton, p. 1098. Heming. p. 505. Chron. Dunſt. p. 36.

Henry

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Henry delivered from confinement, without exacting any ranſom, about nine hundred knights whom he had taken
1174. priſoners; but it coſt William the ancient independancy of his crown as the price of his liberty. He ſtipulated to do homage to Henry for Scotland and all his other poſſeſſions; he engaged that all the barons and nobility of his kingdom ſhould alſo do homage; that the biſhops ſhould take an oath of fealty; that both ſhould ſwear to adhere to the king of England againſt their native prince, if the latter ſhould break his engagements; and that the
1175. fortreſſes of Edinburgh, Stirling, Berwick, Roxborough,
10th Aug. and Jedborough ſhould be delivered into Henry's hands, till the performance of articles [e]. This ſevere and humiliating treaty was executed in its full rigour. William, being releaſed, brought up all his barons, prelates, and abbots; and they did homage to Henry in the cathedral of York, and acknowledged him and his ſucceſſors for their ſuperior lord [f]. The Engliſh monarch ſtretched ſtill farther the rigour of the conditions which he exacted. He engaged the king and ſtates of Scotland to make a perpetual ceſſion of the fortreſſes of Berwick and Roxborough, and to allow the caſtle of Edinburgh to remain in his hands for a limited time. This was the firſt great aſcendant which England obtained over Scotland; and indeed the firſt important tranſaction, which had paſſed between thoſe kingdoms. Few princes have been ſo fortunate as to gain conſiderable advantages over their weaker neighbours with leſs violence and injuſtice, than was practiſed by Henry againſt the king of Scots, whom he had taken priſoner in battle, and who had wantonly engaged in a war, in which all the neighbours of that prince, and

[e] M. Paris, p. 91. Chron. Dunſt. p. 36. Hoveden, p. 545. M. Weſtm. p. 251. Diceto, p. 584. Brompton, p. 1105. Rymer, vol. i. p. 39. Liber Niger Scaccarii, p. 36. [f] Bened. Abb. p. 113.

even

even his own family, were, without provocation, combined againſt him [g]. CHAP. IX.

HENRY, having thus, contrary to expectation, extricated himſelf with honour from a ſituation, in which his throne was expoſed to the moſt imminent danger, was employed for ſeveral years in the adminiſtration of juſtice, in the execution of the laws, and in guarding againſt thoſe inconveniences, which either the paſt convulſions of his ſtate, or the political inſtitutions of that age, unavoidably occaſioned. The proviſions, which he made, ſhow ſuch largeneſs of thought as qualified him for being a legiſlator; and they were commonly calculated as well for the future as the preſent happineſs of his kingdom. 1175. King's equitable adminiſtration.

HE enacted ſevere penalties againſt robbery, murder, falſe coining, arſon; and ordained that theſe crimes ſhould be puniſhed by the amputation of the right hand and right foot [h]. The pecuniary commutation for crimes, which has a falſe appearance of lenity, had been gradually diſuſed; and ſeems to have been entirely aboliſhed by the rigour of theſe ſtatutes. The ſuperſtitious trial by water ordeal, though condemned by the church [i], ſtill ſubſiſted; but Henry ordained, that any man, accuſed of murder or any heinous felony by the oath of the legal knights of the county, ſhould, even though acquitted by the ordeal, be obliged to abjure the realm [k]. 1176.

ALL advances towards reaſon and good ſenſe are ſlow and gradual. Henry, though ſenſible of the great ab-

[g] Some Scotch hiſtorians pretend, that William paid, beſides, 100,000 pounds of ranſom, which is quite incredible. The ranſom of Richard I. who, beſides England, poſſeſſed ſo many rich territories in France, was only 150,000 marks, and yet was levied with great difficulty. Indeed, two thirds of it only could be paid before his delivery. [h] Bened. Abb. p. 132. Hoveden, p. 549. [i] Seld. Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 204. [k] Bened. Abb. p. 132.

CHAP. IX.

1176.

surdity attending the trial by duel or battle, did not venture to abolish it: He only admitted either of the parties to challenge a trial by an assize or jury of twelve freeholders [l]. This latter method of trial seems to have been very ancient in England, and was fixed by the laws of king Alfred: But the barbarous and violent genius of the age had of late given more credit to the trial by battle, which had become the general method of deciding all important controversies. It was never abolished by law in England; and there is an instance of it so late as the reign of Elizabeth: But the institution revived by this king, being found more reasonable and more suitable to a civilized people, gradually prevailed over it.

THE partition of England into four divisions, and the appointment of itinerant justices to go the circuit in each division, and to decide the causes in the counties, was another important ordinance of this prince, which had a direct tendency to curb the oppressive barons, and to protect the inferior gentry and common people in their property [m]. Those justices were either prelates or considerable noblemen; who, besides carrying the authority of the king's commission, were able, by the dignity of their own character, to give weight and credit to the laws.

THAT there might be fewer obstacles to the execution of justice, the king was vigilant in demolishing all the new erected castles of the nobility, in England as well as in his foreign dominions; and he permitted no fortress to remain in the custody of those whom he found reason to suspect [n].

BUT lest the kingdom should be weakened by this demolition of the fortresses, the king fixed an assize of arms, by which all his subjects were obliged to put themselves in a situation for defending themselves and the

[l] Glanv. lib. ii. cap. 7. [m] Hoveden, p. 550.
[n] Benedict. Abbas, p. 202. Diceto, p. 585.

realm.

realm. Every man, poſſeſſed of a knight's fee, was ordained to have for each fee, a coat of mail, a helmet, a ſhield and a lance; every free layman, poſſeſſed of goods to the value of ſixteen marks, was to be armed in like manner; every one that poſſeſſed ten marks was obliged to have an iron gorget, a cap of iron, and a lance; all burgeſſes were to have a cap of iron, a lance and a wambais, that is, a coat quilted with wool, tow, or ſuch like materials [o]. It appears, that archery, for which the Engliſh were afterwards ſo renowned, had not, at this time, become very common among them. The ſpear was the chief weapon employed in battle. CHAP. IX. 1175.

THE clergy and the laity were during that age in a ſtrange ſituation with regard to each other, and ſuch as may ſeem totally incompatible with a civilized, and indeed with any ſpecies of government. If a clergyman was guilty of murder, he could be puniſhed by degradation only: If he was murdered, the murderer was expoſed to nothing but excommunication and eccleſiaſtical cenſures; and the crime was atoned for by penances and ſubmiſſion [p]. Hence the aſſaſſins of Thomas a Becket himſelf, though guilty of the moſt atrocious wickedneſs, and the moſt repugnant to the ſentiments of that age, lived ſecurely in their own houſes, without being called to account by Henry himſelf, who was ſo much concerned, both in honour and intereſt, to puniſh that crime, and who profeſſed or affected on all occaſions the moſt extreme abhorrence of it. It was not till they found their preſence ſhunned by every one as excommunicated perſons, that they were induced to take a journey to Rome, to throw themſelves at the feet of the pontiff, and to ſubmit to the penances impoſed upon them: After which, they continued to poſſeſs, without moleſtation, their honours and fortunes, and ſeem even

[o] Bened. Abb. p. 305. Annal. Waverl. p. 161.
[p] Petri Bleſſen. epiſt. 73. apud Bibl. Patr. tom. xxiv. p. 902.

CHAP. IX. 1176.

to have recovered the countenance and good opinion of the public. But as the king, by the conſtitutions of Clarendon, which he endeavoured ſtill to maintain [q], had ſubjected the clergy to a trial by the civil magiſtrate, it ſeemed but juſt to give them the protection of that power, to which they owed obedience: It was enacted, that the murderers of clergymen ſhould be tried before the juſticiary in the preſence of the biſhop or his official; and beſides the uſual puniſhment for murder, ſhould be ſubjected to a forfeiture of their eſtates, and a confiſcation of their goods and chattels [r].

THE king paſſed an equitable law, that the goods of a vaſſal ſhould not be ſeized for the debt of his lord, unleſs the vaſſal be ſurety for the debt; and that the rents of vaſſals ſhould be paid to the creditors of the lord, not to the lord himſelf. It is remarkable, that this law was enacted by the king in a council which he held at Verneüil, and which conſiſted of ſome prelates and barons of England, as well as ſome of Normandy, Poictou, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Britanny; and the ſtatute took place in all theſe different territories [s]: A certain proof how irregular the ancient feudal government was, and how near the kings, in ſome inſtances, approached to deſpotiſm, though in others they ſeemed ſcarcely to poſſeſs any authority. If a prince, much dreaded and revered like Henry, obtained but the appearance of general conſent to an ordinance, which was equitable and juſt, it became immediately an eſtabliſhed law, and all his ſubjects acquieſced in it. If the prince was hated or deſpiſed; if the nobles, who ſupported him, had ſmall influence; if the humours of the times diſpoſed the people to queſ-

[q] Chron. Gervaſe, p. 1433. [r] Diceto, p. 592. Chron. Gervaſe, p. 1433. [s] Bened. Abb. p. 248. It was uſual for the kings of England, after the conqueſt of Ireland, to ſummon barons and members of that country to the Engliſh parliament. Molineux's caſe of Ireland, p. 64, 65, 66.

tion

tion the juſtice of his ordinance; the fulleſt and moſt authentic aſſembly had no authority. Thus all was confuſion and diſorder; no regular idea of a conſtitution; force and violence decided every thing. CHAP. IX. 1176.

THE ſucceſs, which had attended Henry in his wars, did not encourage his neighbours to attempt any thing againſt him; and his tranſactions with them, during the remainder of his reign, contain little memorable. Scotland remained in that ſtate of feudal ſubjection, to which he had reduced it; and gave him no farther inquietude. He ſent over his fourth ſon, John, into Ireland, with a view of making a more complete conqueſt of that iſland; but the petulance and incapacity of this prince, by which he enraged the Iriſh chieftains, obliged the king ſoon after to recall him [t]. The king of France had fallen into an abject ſuperſtition; and was induced by a devotion, more ſincere than that of Henry, to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Becket, in order to obtain his interceſſion for the recovery of Philip, his eldeſt ſon. He probably thought himſelf well intitled to the favour of that ſaint, on account of their ancient intimacy; and hoped, that Becket, whom he had protected while on earth, would not now, when he was ſo highly advanced in heaven, forget his old friend and benefactor. The monks, ſenſible that their ſaint's honour was concerned in the caſe, failed not to publiſh, that Lewis's prayers were anſwered, and that the young prince was reſtored to health, by Becket's interceſſion. That king himſelf was ſoon after ſtruck with an apoplexy, which deprived him of his underſtanding: Philip, though a youth of fifteen, took on him the adminiſtration, till his father's death, which happened ſoon after, opened his way to the throne; and he proved the ableſt and greateſt monarch that had governed that kingdom ſince the age of Charlemagne. The ſuperior years,

[t] Bened. Abb. p. 437, &c.

CHAP. IX.

1180.

however, and experience of Henry, while they moderated his ambition, gave him such an ascendant over this prince, that no dangerous rivalship, for a long time, arose between them. The English monarch, instead of taking advantage of his situation, rather employed his good offices in composing the quarrels which arose in the royal family of France; and he was successful in mediating a reconciliation between Philip and his mother and uncles. These services were but ill-requited by Philip, who, when he came to man's estate, fomented all the domestic discords in the royal family of England, and encouraged Henry's sons in their ungrateful and undutiful behaviour towards him.

Prince Henry, equally impatient of obtaining power, and incapable of using it, renewed to the king the demand of his resigning Normandy; and on meeting with a refusal, he fled with his consort to the court of France: But not finding Philip, at that time, disposed to enter into war for his sake, he accepted of his father's offers of reconciliation, and made him submissions. It was a cruel circumstance in the king's fortune, that he could hope for no tranquillity from the criminal enterprizes of his sons but by their mutual discord and animosities, which disturbed his family, and threw his state into convulsions. Richard, whom he had made master of Guienne, and who had displayed his valour and military genius, by suppressing the revolts of his mutinous barons, refused to obey Henry's orders, in doing homage to his elder brother for that dutchy; and he defended himself against young Henry and Geoffrey, who, uniting their arms, carried war into his territories [u]. The king with some difficulty composed this difference; but immediately found his eldest son engaged in conspiracies, and ready to take arms against himself. While the young prince was

[u] Ypod Neust. p. 451. Bened. Abb. p. 383. Diceto, p. 617.

conducting

conducting these criminal designs, he was seized with a fever at Martel, a castle near Turenne, to which he had retired in discontent; and seeing the approaches of death, he was at last struck with remorse for his undutiful behaviour towards his father. He sent a message to the king, who was not far distant; expressed his contrition for his faults; and entreated the favour of a visit, that he might at least die with the satisfaction of having obtained his forgiveness. Henry, who had so often experienced the prince's ingratitude and violence, apprehended that his sickness was entirely fictitious, and he durst not entrust himself into his son's hands: But when he soon after received intelligence of young Henry's death, and the proofs of his sincere repentance, this good prince was affected with the deepest sorrow; he thrice fainted away; he accused his own hard-heartedness in refusing the dying request of his son; and he lamented, that he had deprived that prince of the last opportunity of making atonement for his offences, and of pouring out his soul in the bosom of his reconciled father [w]. This prince died in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

CHAP. IX. 1183.

11th June. Death of young Henry.

THE behaviour of his surviving children did not tend to give the king any consolation for this loss. As prince Henry had left no posterity, Richard was become heir to all his dominions; and the king intended, that John, his third surviving son and favourite, should inherit Guienne as his appanage: But Richard refused his consent, fled into that dutchy, and even made preparations for carrying on war, as well against his father as against his brother Geoffrey, who was now put in possession of Britanny. Henry sent for Eleanor, his queen, the heiress of Guienne, and required Richard to deliver up to her the dominion of these territories; which that prince, either dreading an insurrection of the Gascons in her favour, or

[w] Bened. Abb. p. 393. Hoveden, p. 621. Trivet, vol. i. p. 84.

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retaining some sense of duty towards her, readily performed; and he peaceably returned to his father's court.

1183. No sooner was this quarrel accommodated, than Geoffrey, the most vicious perhaps of all Henry's unhappy family, broke out into violence; demanded Anjou to be annexed to his dominions of Britanny; and on meeting with a refusal, fled to the court of France, and levied forces against his father [x]. Henry was freed from this danger by his son's death, who was slain in a tournament at Paris [y]. The widow of Geoffrey, soon after his decease, was delivered of a son, who received the name of Arthur, and was invested in the dutchy of Britanny, under the guardianship of his grandfather, who, as duke of Normandy, was also superior lord of that territory. Philip, as lord Paramount, disputed some time his title to this wardship; but was obliged to yield to the inclinations of the Bretons, who preferred the government of Henry.

Crusades. But the rivalship between these potent princes, and all their inferior interests, seemed now to have given place to the general passion for the relief of the holy land, and the expulsion of the Saracens. Those infidels, though obliged to yield to the immense inundation of Christians in the first crusade, had recovered courage after the torrent was past; and attacking on all quarters the settlements of the Europeans, had reduced these adventurers to great difficulties, and obliged them to apply again for succours from the west. A second crusade, under the emperor Conrade, and Lewis VII. king of France, in which there perished above 200,000 men, brought them but a temporary relief; and those princes, after losing such immense armies, and seeing the flower of their nobility fall by their side, returned with little honour into Europe. But these repeated misfortunes, which drained the western world of its people and trea-

[x] Neubrig. p. 422. [y] Bened. Abb. p. 451. Chron. Gervase, p. 1480.

sure,

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sure, were not yet sufficient to cure men of their passion for those spiritual adventures; and a new incident rekindled with fresh fury the zeal of the ecclesiastics and military adventurers among the Latin Christians. Saladin, a prince of great generosity, bravery, and conduct, having fixed himself on the throne of Egypt, began to extend his conquests over the east; and finding the settlement of the Christians in Palestine an invincible obstacle to the progress of his arms, he bent the whole force of his policy and valour to subdue that small and barren, but important territory. Taking advantage of dissentions, which prevailed among the champions of the cross, and having secretly gained the count of Tripoli, who commanded their armies, he invaded the frontiers with a mighty power; and, aided by the treachery of that count, gained over them at Tiberiade a complete victory, which utterly annihilated the force of the already languishing kingdom of Jerusalem. The holy city itself fell into his hands after a feeble resistance; the kingdom of Antioch was almost entirely subdued; and except some maritime towns, nothing considerable remained of those boasted conquests, which, near a century before, it had cost the efforts of all Europe to acquire [z].

1183.

1187.

The western Christians were astonished on receiving this dismal intelligence. Pope Urban III. it is pretended, died of grief; and his successor, Gregory VIII. employed the whole time of his short pontificate in rouzing to arms all the Christians who acknowledged his authority. The general cry was, that they were unworthy of enjoying any inheritance in heaven, who did not vindicate from the dominion of the infidels the inheritance of God on earth, and deliver from slavery that country which had been consecrated by the footsteps of their Redeemer. William, archbishop of Tyre, having pro-

[z] M. Paris, p. 190.

cured

CHAP. IX.

1188. 21st January.

cured a conference between Henry and Philip near Gisors, enforced all these topics; gave a pathetic description of the miserable state of the eastern Christians; and employed every argument to excite the ruling passions of the age, superstition and jealousy of military honour [a]. The two monarchs immediately took the cross; many of their most considerable vassals imitated the example [b]; and as the emperor Frederic I. entered into the same confederacy, some well-grounded hopes of success were entertained; and men flattered themselves, that an enterprize, which had failed under the conduct of many independant leaders, or of imprudent princes, might at last, by the efforts of such potent and able monarchs, be brought to a happy issue.

THE kings of France and England imposed a tax, amounting to the tenth of all moveable goods, on such as remained at home [c]; but as they exempted from this burden most of the regular clergy, the secular aspired to the same immunity; pretended that their duty obliged them to assist the crusade with their prayers alone; and it was with some difficulty they were constrained to desist from an opposition, which in them, who had been the chief promoters of those pious enterprizes, appeared with the worst grace imaginable [d]. This backwardness of the clergy is perhaps a symptom, that the enthusiastic ardour, which had at first seized the people for crusades, was now by time and ill success considerably abated; and that the frenzy was chiefly supported by the military genius and love of glory in the monarchs.

BUT before this great machine could be put in motion, there were still many obstacles to surmount. Philip, jealous of Henry's power, entered into a private confederacy with young Richard; and working on his ambitious and impatient temper, persuaded him, instead of

[a] Bened. Abb. p. 531.
[b] Neubrig. p. 435. Heming. p. 512.
[c] Bened. Abb. p. 498.
[d] Petri Bleſſen. epiſt. 112.

supporting

supporting and aggrandizing that monarchy, which he was one day to inherit, to seek present power and independance, by disturbing and dismembering it. In order to give a pretence for hostilities between the two kings, Richard broke into the territories of Raymond, count of Toulouse, who immediately carried his complaints of this violence before the king of France as his superior lord. Philip remonstrated with Henry; but received for answer, that Richard had confessed to the archbishop of Dublin, that his enterprize against Raymond had been undertaken by the approbation of Philip himself, and was conducted by his authority. The king of France, who might have been covered with shame and confusion by this detection, still prosecuted his design, and invaded the provinces of Berri and Auvergne, under colour of revenging the quarrel of the count of Toulouse [e]. Henry retaliated, by making inroads upon the frontiers of France, and burning Dreux. As this war, which destroyed all hopes of success in the projected crusade, gave great scandal, the two kings held a conference at the accustomed place between Gisors and Trie, in order to find means of accommodating their differences: They separated on worse terms than before; and Philip, to show his disgust, ordered a great elm, under which the conferences had been usually held, to be cut down [f]; as if he had renounced all desire of accommodation, and was determined to carry the war to extremity against the king of England. But his own vassals refused to serve under him in so invidious a cause [g]; and he was obliged to come anew to a conference with Henry, and to offer terms of peace. These terms were such as entirely opened the eyes of the king of England, and fully convinced him of the perfidy of his son, and his secret alliance with Philip, of which he had before only entertained.

CHAP. IX.

1189. Revolt of prince Richard.

[e] Bened. Abb. p. 508. [f] Ibid. p. 517, 532. [g] Ibid. p. 519.

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1189. tained some suspicion. The king of France required, that Richard should be crowned king of England in the life-time of his father, should be invested in all his transmarine dominions, and should immediately espouse Alice, Philip's sister, to whom he had formerly been affianced, and who had already been conducted into England [h]. Henry had experienced such fatal effects, both from the crowning of his eldest son, and from that prince's alliance with the royal family of France, that he rejected these terms; and Richard, in consequence of his secret agreement with Philip, immediately revolted from him [i], did homage to the king of France for all the dominions which Henry held of that crown, and received the investitures, as if he had already been the lawful proprietor. Some historians assert, that Henry himself had become enamoured of young Alice, and mention this as an additional reason for his refusing these conditions: But he had so many other just and equitable motives for his conduct, that it is superfluous to assign a cause, which the great prudence and advanced age of that monarch render somewhat improbable.

Cardinal Albano, the pope's legate, displeased with these encreasing obstacles to the crusade, excommunicated Richard, as the chief spring of discord: But the sentence of excommunication, which, when it was properly prepared, and was zealously supported by the clergy, had often great influence in that age, proved entirely ineffectual in the present case. The chief barons of Poictou, Guienne, Normandy, and Anjou, being attached to the young prince, and finding that he had now received the investiture from their superior lord, declared for him, and made inroads into the territories of such as still adhered to the king. Henry, disquieted by the daily revolts of his mutinous subjects, and dreading still worse effects

[h] Bened. Abb. p. 521. Hoveden, p. 652. Neubrig. p. 437.

[i] Brompton, p. 1149.

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from their turbulent diſpoſition, had again recourſe to papal authority; and engaged the cardinal Anagni, who had ſucceeded Albano in the legateſhip, to threaten Philip with laying an interdict on all his dominions. But Philip, who was a prince of great vigour and capacity, deſpiſed the menace, and told Anagni, that it belonged not to the pope to interpoſe in the temporal diſputes of princes, much leſs in thoſe between him and his rebellious vaſſal. He even proceeded ſo far as to reproach him with partiality, and with receiving bribes from the king of England [k]; while Richard, ſtill more outrageous, offered to draw his ſword againſt the legate, and was hindered, by the interpoſition alone of the company, from committing violence upon him [l]. CHAP. IX. 1189.

THE king of England was now obliged to defend his dominions by arms, and to engage in a war with France and with his eldeſt ſon, a prince of great valour, on ſuch diſadvantageous terms. Ferté-Barnard fell firſt into the hands of the enemy: Mans was next taken by aſſault; and Henry, who had thrown himſelf into that place, eſcaped with ſome difficulty [m]: Amboiſe, Chaumont, and Chateau de Loire, opened their gates on the appearance of Philip and Richard: Tours was inveſted; and the king, who had retired to Saumur, and had daily inſtances of the cowardice or infidelity of his governors, expected the moſt diſmal iſſue to all his enterprizes. While he was in this ſtate of deſpondency, the duke of Burgundy, the count of Flanders, and the archbiſhop of Rheims interpoſed with their good offices; and the intelligence, which he received of the taking of Tours, and which made him fully ſenſible of the deſperate ſituation of his affairs, ſo ſubdued his ſpirit, that he ſubmitted to all the rigorous terms, which were impoſed upon him.

[k] M. Paris, p. 104. Bened. Abb. p. 542. Hoveden, p. 652.
[l] M. Paris, p. 104. [m] M. Paris, p. 105. Bened. Abb. p. 543. Hoveden, p. 653.

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He agreed, that Richard ſhould marry the princeſs Alice; that that prince ſhould receive the homage and oath of fealty of all his ſubjects both in England and his tranſmarine dominions; that he himſelf ſhould pay twenty thouſand marks to the king of France as a compenſation for the charges of the war; that his own barons ſhould engage to make him obſerve this treaty by force, and in caſe of his violating it, ſhould promiſe to join Philip and Richard againſt him; and that all his vaſſals, who had entered into confederacy with Richard, ſhould receive an indemnity for this offence [n].

But the mortification, which Henry, who had been accuſtomed to give the law in moſt treaties, received from theſe diſadvantageous terms, was the leaſt that he met with on this occaſion. When he demanded a liſt of thoſe barons, to whom he was bound to grant a pardon for their connections with Richard; he was aſtoniſhed to find, at the head of them, the name of his ſecond ſon, John [o]; who had always been his favourite, whoſe intereſts he had ever anxiouſly at heart, and who had even, on account of his aſcendant over him, often excited the jealouſy of Richard [p]. The unhappy father, already overloaded with cares and ſorrows, finding this laſt diſappointment in his domeſtic tenderneſs, broke out into expreſſions of the utmoſt deſpair, curſed the day in which he received his miſerable being, and beſtowed, on his ungrateful and undutiful children, a malediction which he never could be prevailed on to retract [q]. The more his heart was diſpoſed to friendſhip and affection, the more he reſented the barbarous return, which his four ſons had ſucceſſively made to his parental care; and this finiſhing blow, by depriving him of every comfort in

[n] M. Paris, p. 106. Bened. Abb. p. 515. Hoveden, p. 653.
[o] Hoveden, p. 654. [p] Bened. Abb. p. 541. [q] Hoveden, p. 654.

life,

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life, quite broke his ſpirit, and threw him into a linger-ing fever, of which he expired, at the caſtle of Chinon near Saumur. His natural ſon, Geoffrey, who alone had behaved dutifully towards him, attended his corpſe to the nunnery of Fontevrault; where it lay in ſtate in the abbey-church. Next day, Richard, who came to viſit the dead body of his father, and who, notwithſtanding his criminal conduct, was not wholly deſtitute of generoſity, was ſtruck with horror and remorſe at the ſight; and as the attendants obſerved, that, at that very inſtant, blood guſhed from the mouth and noſtrils of the corpſe [r], he exclaimed, agreeably to a vulgar ſuperſtition, that he was his father's murderer; and he expreſſed a deep ſenſe, though too late, of that undutiful behaviour, which had brought his parent to an untimely grave [s].

1189. 6th July. Death.

THUS died, in the fifty-eighth year of his age and thirty-fifth of his reign, the greateſt prince of his time, for wiſdom, virtue and ability, and the moſt powerful in extent of dominion of all thoſe that had ever filled the throne of England. His character, in private as well as in public life, is almoſt without a blemiſh; and he ſeems to have poſſeſſed every accompliſhment both of body and mind, which makes a man either eſtimable or amiable. He was of a middle ſtature, ſtrong and well proportioned; his countenance was lively and engaging; his converſation affable and entertaining; his elocution eaſy, perſuaſive, and ever at command. He loved peace, but poſſeſſed both bravery and conduct in war; was provident without timidity; ſevere in the execution of juſtice without rigour; and temperate without auſterity. He preſerved health, and kept himſelf from corpulency, to which he was ſomewhat inclined, by an abſtemious diet, and by frequent exerciſe, particularly hunting. When he could enjoy leiſure, he recreated himſelf either in learned

and character of Henry.

[r] Chron. Abb. p. 547. Brompton, p. 1151. [s] M. Paris, p. 107.

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CHAP. IX. 1189.

converſation or in reading; and he cultivated his natural talents by ſtudy, above any prince of his time. His affections, as well as his enmities, were warm and durable; and his long experience of the ingratitude and infidelity of men never deſtroyed the natural ſenſibility of his temper, which diſpoſed him to friendſhip and ſociety. His character has been tranſmitted to us by ſeveral writers, who were his contemporaries [t]; and it extremely reſembles, in its moſt remarkable ſtrokes, that of his maternal grandfather Henry I.: Excepting only, that ambition, which was a ruling paſſion in both, found not in the firſt Henry ſuch unexceptionable means of exerting itſelf, and puſhed that prince into meaſures, which were both criminal in themſelves, and were the cauſe of farther crimes, from which his grandſon's conduct was happily exempted.

Miſcellaneous tranſactions of this reign.

THIS prince, like moſt of his predeceſſors of the Norman line, except Stephen, paſſed more of his time on the continent than in this iſland: He was ſurrounded with the Engliſh gentry and nobility, when abroad: The French gentry and nobility attended him when he reſided in England: Both nations acted in the government, as if they were the ſame people; and on many occaſions, the legiſlatures ſeem not to have been diſtinguiſhed. As the king and all the Engliſh barons were of French extraction, the manners of that people acquired the aſcendant, and were regarded as the models of imitation. All foreign improvements, therefore, ſuch as they were, in literature and politeneſs, in laws and arts, ſeem now to have been, in a good meaſure, tranſplanted into England; and that kingdom was become little inferior, in all the faſhionable accompliſhments, to any of its neighbours on the continent. The more homely, but more ſenſible

[t] Petri Bleſ. epiſt. 46, 47. in Bibliotheca Patrum, vol. xxiv. p. 985, 986, &c. Girald. Camb. p. 783, &c.

manner

manners and principles of the Saxons, were exchanged for the affectations of chivalry, and the ſubtilties of ſchool philoſophy: The feudal ideas of civil government, the Romiſh ſentiments in religion, had taken entire poſſeſſion of the people: By the former, the ſenſe of ſubmiſſion towards princes was ſomewhat diminiſhed in the barons; by the latter, the devoted attachment to papal authority was much augmented among the clergy. The Norman and other foreign families, eſtabliſhed in England, had now ſtruck deep root; and being entirely incorporated with the people, whom at firſt they oppreſſed and deſpiſed, they no longer thought that they needed the protection of the crown for the enjoyment of their fortunes, or conſidered their tenure as precarious or dependant. They aſpired to the ſame liberty and independance, which they ſaw enjoyed by their brethren on the continent, and deſired to reſtrain thoſe exorbitant prerogatives and arbitrary practices, which the neceſſities of war and the violence of conqueſt had at firſt obliged them to indulge in their monarch. That memory alſo of a more equal government under the Saxon princes, which remained with the Engliſh, diffuſed ſtill farther the ſpirit of liberty, and made the barons both deſirous of more independance to themſelves, and willing to indulge it to the people. And it was not long 'ere this ſecret revolution in the ſentiments of men produced, firſt violent convulſions in the ſtate, then an evident alteration in the maxims of government.

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The hiſtory of all the preceding kings of England ſince the conqueſt, gives evident proofs of the diſorders attending the feudal inſtitutions; the licentiouſneſs of the barons, their ſpirit of rebellion againſt the prince and laws, and of animoſity againſt each other: The conduct of the barons in the tranſmarine dominions of thoſe monarchs afforded perhaps ſtill more flagrant inſtances of

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these convulsions; and the history of France, during several ages, consists almost entirely of narrations of this nature. The cities, during the continuance of this violent government, could neither be very numerous nor populous; and there occur instances, which seem to prove, that, though these are always the first seat of law and liberty, their police was in general loose and irregular, and exposed to the same disorders, with those by which the country was generally infested. It was a custom in London for great numbers, to the amount of a hundred or more, the sons and relations of considerable citizens, to form themselves into a licentious confederacy, to break into rich houses and plunder them, to rob and murder the passengers, and to commit with impunity all sorts of disorder. By these crimes, it had become so dangerous to walk the streets by night, that the citizens durst no more venture abroad after sun-set, than if they had been exposed to the incursions of a public enemy. The brother of the earl of Ferrars had been murdered by some of those nocturnal rioters; and the death of so eminent a person, which was much more regarded than that of many thousands of an inferior station, so provoked the king, that he swore vengeance against the criminals, and became thenceforth more rigorous in the execution of the laws [u].

THERE is another instance given by historians, which proves to what a height such riots had proceeded, and how open these criminals were in committing their robberies. A band of them had attacked the house of a rich citizen, with an intention of plundering it; had broken through a stone-wall with hammers and wedges; and had already entered the house sword in hand; when the citizen, armed cap-a-pee and supported by his faithful servants, appeared in the passage to oppose them: He cut off the right hand of the first robber that entered; and made such stout re-

[u] Bened. Abb. p. 196.

sistance,

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sistance, that his neighbours had leisure to assemble, and come to his relief. The man, who lost his hand, was taken; and was tempted by the promise of pardon to reveal his confederates; among whom was one John Senex, esteemed among the richest and best-born citizens in London. He was convicted by the ordeal trial; and though he offered five hundred marks for his life, the king refused the money, and ordered him to be hanged [w]. It appears from a statute of Edward I. that these disorders were not remedied even in that reign. It was then made penal to go out at night after the hour of the curfew, to carry a weapon, or to walk without a light or lanthorn [x]. It is said in the preamble to this law, that, both by night and by day, there were continual frays in the streets of London.

HENRY's exactness in administering justice had gained him so great a reputation, that even foreign and distant princes made him arbiter, and submitted their differences to his judgment. Sanchez, king of Navarre, having some controversies with Alfonso, king of Castile, was contented, though Alfonso had married the daughter of Henry, to chuse this prince for a referee; and they agreed, each of them to consign three castles into neutral hands, as a pledge of their not departing from his award. Henry made the cause be examined before his great council, and gave a sentence, which was submitted to by both parties. These two Spanish kings sent each a stout champion to the court of England, in order to defend his cause by arms, in case the way of duel had been chosen by Henry [y].

HENRY so far abolished the barbarous and absurd practice of confiscating ships, which had been wrecked on the coast, that he ordained, if one man or animal was

[w] Bened. Abb. p. 197, 198. [x] Observations on the ancient Statutes, p. 216. [y] Rymer, vol. iv. p. 43. Bened. Abb. p. 172. Diceto, p. 597. Brompton, p. 1120.

CHAP. IX. alive in the ship, that the vessel and goods should be restored to the owners [z].

1189. The reign of Henry was remarkable also for an innovation, which was afterwards carried farther by his successors, and was attended with the most important consequences to the government. This prince was disgusted with the species of military force, which was established by the feudal institutions, and which, though it was extremely burdensome to the subject, yet rendered very little service to the sovereign. The barons, or military tenants, came late into the field; they were obliged to serve only for forty days; they were unskilful and disorderly in all their operations; and they were apt to carry into the camp the same refractory and independant spirit, to which they were accustomed in their civil government. Henry, therefore, introduced the practice of making a commutation of their military service for money; and he levied scutages from his baronies and knights fees, instead of requiring the personal attendance of his vassals. There is mention made, in the history of the exchequer, of these scutages in his second, fifth, and eighteenth year [a]; and other writers give us an account of three more of them [b]. When the prince had thus obtained money, he made a contract with some of those adventurers, in which Europe at that time abounded: They found him soldiers of the same character with themselves, who were bound to serve for a stipulated time: The armies were less numerous, but more useful, than when composed of all the military vassals of the crown: The feudal institutions began to relax: The kings became rapacious for money, on which all their power depended: The barons, seeing no end of exactions, sought to defend their property: And as the same causes had nearly the same effects, in the different

[z] Rymer, vol. i. p. 36.
[a] Madox, p. 435, 436, 437, 438.
[b] Tyrrel, vol. ii. p. 466. from the records.

countries

countries of Europe, the ſeveral crowns either loſt or acquired authority, according to their different ſucceſs in this conteſt. CHAP. IX. 1189.

THIS prince was alſo the firſt that levied a tax on the moveables or perſonal eſtates of his ſubjects, nobles as well as commons. Their zeal for the holy wars made them ſubmit to this innovation; and a precedent being once obtained, this taxation became, in following reigns, the uſual method of ſupplying the neceſſities of the crown. The tax of Danegelt, ſo generally odious to the nation, was remitted in this reign.

IT was a uſual practice of the kings of England, to repeat the ceremony of their coronation thrice every year, on aſſembling the ſtates at the three great feſtivals. Henry, after the firſt years of his reign, never renewed this ceremony, which was found to be very expenſive and very uſeleſs. None of his ſucceſſors ever revived it. It is conſidered as a great act of grace in this prince, that he mitigated the rigour of the foreſt laws, and puniſhed any tranſgreſſions of them, not capitally, but by fines, impriſonments, and other more moderate penalties.

SINCE we are here collecting ſome detached incidents, which ſhow the genius of the age, and which could not ſo well enter into the body of our hiſtory, it may not be amiſs to mention the quarrel between Roger archbiſhop of York, and Richard archbiſhop of Canterbury. We may judge of the violence of military men and laymen, when eccleſiaſtics could proceed to ſuch extremities. Cardinal Haguezun being ſent, in 1176, as legate into Britain, ſummoned an aſſembly of the clergy at London; and as both the archbiſhops pretended to ſit on his right hand, this queſtion of precedency begat a controverſy between them. The monks and retainers of archbiſhop Richard fell upon Roger, in the preſence of the cardinal and of the ſynod, threw him to the ground, trampled him under foot, and ſo bruiſed him with blows, that he was

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taken up half dead, and his life was, with difficulty, ſaved from their violence. The archbiſhop of Canterbury was obliged to pay a large ſum of money to the legate, in order to ſuppreſs all complaints with regard to this enormity [c].

We are told by Gyraldus Cambrenſis, that the monks and prior of St. Swithun threw themſelves, one day, proſtrate on the ground and in the mire before Henry, complaining, with many tears and much doleful lamentation, that the biſhop of Wincheſter, who was alſo their abbot, had cut off three diſhes from their table. How many has he left you, ſaid the king? Ten only, replied the diſconſolate monks. I myſelf, exclaimed the king, never have more than three; and I enjoin your biſhop to reduce you to the ſame number [d].

THIS king left only two legitimate ſons, Richard, who ſucceeded him, and John, who inherited no territory, though his father had often intended to leave him a part of his extenſive dominions. He was thence commonly denominated *Lackland*. Henry left three legitimate daughters; Maud, born in 1156, and married to Henry, duke of Saxony; Eleanor, born in 1162, and married to Alphonſo, king of Caſtile; Joan, born in 1165, and married to William, king of Sicily [e].

HENRY is ſaid by ancient hiſtorians to have been of a a very amorous diſpoſition: They mention two of his natural ſons by Roſamond, daughter of lord Clifford, namely Richard Longeſpée, or Longſword, (ſo called from the ſword he uſually wore) who was afterwards married to Ela, the daughter and heir of the earl of Saliſbury; and Geoffrey, firſt biſhop of Lincoln, then archbiſhop of York. All the other circumſtances of the ſtory, commonly told of that lady, ſeem to be fabulous.

[c] Bened. Abb. p. 138, 139. Brompton, p. 1109. Chron. Gerv. p. 1433. Neubrig. p 413. [d] Gir. Camb. cap. 5. in Anglia Sacra, vol. ii.
[e] Dicето, p. 676.

NOTES

TO THE

FIRST VOLUME.

NOTE [A], p. 12.

THIS queſtion has been diſputed with as great zeal and even acrimony between the Scotch and Iriſh antiquaries, as if the honour of their reſpective countries were the moſt deeply concerned in the deciſion. We ſhall not enter into any detail on ſo unintereſting a ſubject; but ſhall propoſe our opinion in a few words. It appears more than probable, from the ſimilitude of language and manners, that Britain either was originally peopled, or was ſubdued, by the migration of inhabitants from Gaul, and Ireland from Britain: The poſition of the ſeveral countries, is an additional reaſon that favours this concluſion. It appears alſo probable, that the migrations of that colony of Gauls or Celts, who peopled or ſubdued Ireland, was originally made from the north-weſt parts of Britain; and this conjecture (if it do not merit a higher name) is founded both on the Iriſh language, which is a very different dialect from the Welſh and from the language anciently ſpoken in South Britain, and on the vicinity of Lancaſhire, Cumberland, Galloway and Argyleſhire to that iſland. Theſe events, as they paſſed long before the age of hiſtory and records, muſt be known by reaſoning alone, which in this caſe ſeems to be pretty ſatisfactory: Cæſar and Tacitus, not to mention a multitude of other Greek and Roman authors, were guided by like inferences. But beſides theſe primitive facts, which lie in a very remote antiquity, it is a matter of poſitive and undoubted teſtimony, that the Roman province of Britain, during the time of the lower empire, was much infeſted by bands of

robbers or pyrates, whom the provincial Britons called Scots or Scuits; a name which was probably uſed as a term of reproach, and which theſe banditti themſelves did not acknowledge or aſſume. We may infer from two paſſages in Claudian, and from one in Oroſius and another in Iſidore, that the chief ſeat of theſe Scots was in Ireland. That ſome part of the Iriſh freebooters migrated back to the north-weſt parts of Britain, whence their anceſtors had probably been derived in a more remote age, is poſitively aſſerted by Bede, and implied in Gildas; though neither of theſe authors explain whether the Iriſh Scots made their ſettlement by force or conſent, or by a mixture of both. I grant, that neither Bede nor Gildas are Cæſars or Tacituſes; but ſuch as they are, they remain the ſole teſtimony on the ſubject, and therefore muſt be relied on for want of better: Happily, the frivolouſneſs of the queſtion correſponds to the weakneſs of the authorities. Not to mention, that, if any part of the traditional hiſtory of a barbarous people can be relied on, it is the genealogy of nations, and even ſometimes that of families. It is vain to argue againſt theſe facts from the ſuppoſed warlike diſpoſition of the Highlanders and unwarlike of the ancient Iriſh. Thoſe arguments are ſtill much weaker than the authorities. Nations change very quickly in theſe particulars. The Britons were unable to reſiſt the Picts and Scots, and invited over the Saxons for their defence, who repelled thoſe invaders: Yet the ſame Britons valiantly reſiſted for 150 years not only this victorious band of Saxons, but infinite numbers more, who poured in upon them from all quarters. Robert Bruce in 1322 made a peace, in which England, after many defeats, was conſtrained to acknowledge the independance of his country: Yet in no more diſtant period than ten years after, Scotland was totally ſubdued by a ſmall handful of Engliſh, led by a few private noblemen. All hiſtory is full of ſuch events. The Iriſh Scots, in the courſe of two or three centuries, might find time and opportunities ſufficient to ſettle in North Britain, though we can neither aſſign the period nor cauſes of that revolution. Their barbarous manner of life rendered them much fitter than the Romans for ſubduing theſe mountaineers. And in a word, it is clear, from the language of the two countries, that the Highlanders

Highlanders and the Iriſh are the ſame people, and that the one are a colony from the other. We have poſitive evidence, which, though from neutral perſons, is not perhaps the beſt that may be wiſhed for, that the former ſprang from the latter: We have no evidence at all that the latter ſprang from the former. I ſhall add, that the name of Erſe or Iriſh, given by the low country Scots to the language of the Scotch Highlanders, is a certain proof of the traditional opinion, delivered from father to ſon, that the latter people came originally from Ireland.

NOTE [B], p. 117.

THERE is a ſeeming contradiction in ancient hiſtorians with regard to ſome circumſtances in the ſtory of Edwy and Elgiva. It is agreed, that this prince had a violent paſſion for his ſecond or third couſin, Elgiva, whom he married, though within the degrees prohibited by the canons. It is alſo agreed, that he was dragged from a lady on the day of his coronation, and that the lady was afterwards treated with the ſingular barbarity above mentioned. The only difference is, that Oſberne and ſome others call her his ſtrumpet, not his wife, as ſhe is ſaid to be by Malmeſbury. But this difference is eaſily reconciled: For if Edwy married her contrary to the canons, the monks would be ſure to deny her to be his wife, and would inſiſt that ſhe could be nothing but his ſtrumpet: So that, on the whole, we may eſteem this repreſentation of the matter as certain; at leaſt, as by far the moſt probable. If Edwy had only kept a miſtreſs, it is well known, that there are methods of accommodation with the church, which would have prevented the clergy from proceeding to ſuch extremities againſt him: But his marriage contrary to the canons, was an inſult on their authority, and called for their higheſt reſentment.

NOTE [C], p. 118.

MANY of the Engliſh hiſtorians make Edgar's ſhips amount to an extravagant number, to 3000, or 3600: See Hoveden, p. 426. Flor. Wigorn. p. 607. Abbas Rieval. p. 360. Brompton, p. 869, ſays that Edgar had 4000 veſſels. How can theſe accounts be reconciled to probability, and to the ſtate of the navy in the time of Alfred? W. Thorne makes the whole

whole number amount only to 300, which is more probable. The fleet of Ethelred, Edgar's ſon, muſt have been ſhort of 1000 ſhips; yet the Saxon Chronicle, p. 137, ſays it was the greateſt navy that ever had been ſeen in England.

NOTE [D], p. 141.

ALMOST all the ancient hiſtorians ſpeak of this maſſacre of the Danes as if it had been univerſal, and as if every individual of that nation throughout England had been put to death. But the Danes were almoſt the ſole inhabitants in the kingdoms of Northumberland and Eaſt-Anglia, and were very numerous in Mercia. This repreſentation therefore of the matter is abſolutely impoſſible. Great reſiſtance muſt have been made, and violent wars enſued; which was not the caſe. This account given by Wallingford, though he ſtands ſingle, muſt be admitted as the only true one. We are told, that the name *Lurdane, lord Dane,* for an idle lazy fellow, who lives at other people's expence, came from the conduct of the Danes, who were put to death. But the Engliſh princes had been intirely maſters for ſeveral generations; and only ſupported a military corps of that nation. It ſeems probable, therefore, that it was theſe Danes only that were put to death.

NOTE [E], p. 167.

THE ingenious author of the article GODWIN, in the Biographia Britannica, has endeavoured to clear the memory of that nobleman, upon the ſuppoſition, that all the Engliſh annals had been falſified by the Norman hiſtorians after the conqueſt. But that this ſuppoſition has not much foundation, appears hence, that almoſt all theſe hiſtorians have given a very good character of his ſon Harold, whom it was much more the intereſt of the Norman cauſe to blacken.

NOTE [F], p. 177.

THE whole ſtory of the tranſactions between Edward, Harold, and the duke of Normandy, is told ſo differently by the ancient writers, that there are few important paſſages of the Engliſh hiſtory liable to ſo great uncertainty. I have followed the account, which appeared to me the moſt conſiſtent

conſiſtent and probable. It does not ſeem likely, that Edward ever executed a will in the duke's favour, much leſs that he got it ratified by the ſtates of the kingdom, as is affirmed by ſome. The will would have been known to all, and would have been produced by the Conqueror, to whom it gave ſo plauſible, and really ſo juſt a title; but the doubtful and ambiguous manner in which he ſeems always to have mentioned it, proves, that he could only plead the known intentions of that monarch in his favour, which he was deſirous to call a will. There is indeed a charter of the Conqueror preſerved by Dr. Hickes, vol. i. where he calls himſelf *rex hereditarius*, meaning heir by will; but a prince, poſſeſſed of ſo much power, and attended with ſo much ſucceſs, may employ what pretence he pleaſes: It is ſufficient to refute his pretences to obſerve, that there is a great difference and variation among hiſtorians with regard to a point, which, had it been real, muſt have been agreed upon by all of them.

Again, ſome hiſtorians, particularly Malmſbury and Mathew of Weſtminſter, affirm that Harold had no intention of going over to Normandy, but that taking the air in a pleaſure-boat on the coaſt, he was driven over by ſtreſs of weather to the territories of Guy count of Ponthieu: But beſides that this ſtory is not probable in itſelf, and is contradicted by moſt of the ancient hiſtorians, it is contradicted by a very curious and authentic monument lately diſcovered. It is a tapeſtry, preſerved in the ducal palace of Roüen, and ſuppoſed to have been wrought by orders of Matilda, wife to the emperor: At leaſt it is of very great antiquity. Harold is there repreſented as taking his departure from king Edward in execution of ſome commiſſion, and mounting his veſſel with a great train. The deſign of redeeming his brother and nephew, who were hoſtages, is the moſt likely cauſe that can be aſſigned; and is accordingly mentioned by Eadmer, Hoveden, Brompton, and Simeon of Durham. For a farther account of this piece of tapeſtry, ſee Hiſtoire de l'Academie de Literature, tom. ix. page 535.

NOTE [G], p. 201.

IT appears from the ancient tranſlations of the Saxon annals and laws, and from king Alfred's tranſlation of Bede, as well as from all the ancient hiſtorians, that *comes* in Latin, *alderman*

derman in Saxon, and *earl* in Dano-Saxon were quite ſynonimous. There is only a clauſe in a law of king Athelſtan's, (ſee Spelm. Conc. p. 406.) which has ſtumbled ſome antiquaries, and has made them imagine that an earl was ſuperior to an alderman. The weregild or the price of an earl's blood is there fixed at 15,000 thrimſas, equal to that of an archbiſhop; whereas that of a biſhop and alderman is only 8000 thrimſas. To ſolve this difficulty we muſt have recourſe to Selden's conjecture, (ſee his Titles of Honour, chap. v. p. 603, 604.) that the term of earl was in the age of Athelſtan juſt beginning to be in uſe in England, and ſtood at that time for the atheling or prince of the blood, heir to the crown. This he confirms by a law of Canute, § 55. where an atheling and an archbiſhop are put upon the ſame footing. In another law of the ſame Athelſtan the weregild of the prince or atheling is ſaid to be 15,000 thrimſas. See Wilkins, p. 71. He is therefore the ſame who is called earl in the former law.

NOTE [H], p. 253.

THERE is a paper or record of the family of Sharneborne, which pretends, that that family, which was Saxon, was reſtored upon proving their innocence, as well as other Saxon families, which were in the ſame ſituation. Though this paper was able to impoſe on ſuch great antiquaries as Spellman (ſee Gloſſ. in verbo *Drenges)* and Dugdale, (ſee Baron. vol. i. p. 118.) it is proved by Dr. Brady (ſee anſw. to Petyt, p. 11, 12.) to have been a forgery; and is allowed as ſuch by Tyrrel, though a pertinacious defender of his party-notions, (ſee his hiſt. vol. ii. introd. p. 51. 73.) Ingulf, p. 70. tell us, that very early Hereward, though abſent during the time of the conqueſt, was turned out of all his eſtate, and could not obtain redreſs. William even plundered the monaſteries. Flor. Wigorn. p. 636. Chron Abb. St. Petri de Burgo, p. 43. M. Paris, p. 5. Sim. Dun. p. 200. Diceto, p. 482. Brompton, p 967. Knyghton, p. 2344. Alur. Beverl. p. 130. We are told by Ingulf, that Ivo de Taillebois plundered the monaſtery of Croyland of a great part of its land; and no redreſs could be obtained.

NOTE

NOTE [I], p. 253.

THE obliging all the inhabitants to put out their fires and lights at certain hours, upon the ſounding of a bell, called the *courfeu*, is repreſented by Polydore Virgil, lib. 9. as a mark of the ſervitude of the Engliſh. But this was a law of police, which William had previouſly eſtabliſhed in Normandy. See du Moulin, hiſt. de Normandie, p. 160. The ſame law had place in Scotland. LL. Burgor. cap. 86.

NOTE [K], p. 260.

WHAT theſe laws were of Edward the Confeſſor, which the Engliſh, every reign during a century and a half, deſire ſo paſſionately to have reſtored, is much diſputed by antiquaries, and our ignorance of them ſeems one of the greateſt defects in the ancient Engliſh hiſtory. The collection of laws in Wilkins, which paſs under the name of Edward, are plainly a poſterior and an ignorant compilation. Thoſe to be found in Ingulf are genuine; but ſo imperfect, and contain ſo few clauſes favourable to the ſubject, that we ſee no great reaſon for their contending for them ſo vehemently. It is probable, that the Engliſh meant the *common law*, as it prevailed during the reign of Edward; which we may conjecture to have been more indulgent to liberty than the Norman inſtitutions. The moſt material articles of it were afterwards comprehended in Magna Charta.

NOTE [L], p. 284.

INGULF, p. 70. H. Hunt. p. 370, 372. M. Weſt. p. 225. Gul. Neub. p. 357. Alured. Beverl. p. 124. De geſt. Angl. p. 333. M. Paris, p. 4. Sim. Dun. p. 206. Brompton, p. 962. 980. 1161. Gervaſe Tilb. lib. 1. cap. 16. Textus Roſſenſis apud Seld. Spicileg. ad Eadm. p. 197. Gul. Pict. p. 205. Ordericus Vitalis, p. 521. 666. 853. Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 801. Gul. Malmeſ. p. 52, 57. Knyghton, p. 2354. Eadmer. p. 110. Thom. Rudborne in Ang. Sacra, vol. i. p. 248. Monach. Roff. in Anglia Sacra, vol. ii. p. 276. Girald. Camb. in eadem, vol. ii. p. 413 Hiſt. Elyenſis, p. 516. The words of this laſt hiſtorian, who is very ancient, are remarkable, and worth tranſcribing. *Rex itaque factus Willielmus, quid*

quid in principes Anglorum, qui tantæ cladi ſupereſſe poterant, fecerit, dicere, cum nihil profit, omitto. Quid enim prodeſſet, ſi nec unum in toto regno de illis dicerem priſtina poteſtate uti permiſſum, ſed omnes aut in gravem paupertatis ærumnam detruſos, aut exhæredatos, patria pulſos, aut effoſſis oculis, vel cæteris amputatis membris, opprobrium hominum factos, aut certe miſerrime afflictos, vita privatos. Simili modo utilitate carere exiſtimo dicere quid in minorem populum, non ſolum ab eo, ſed a ſuis actum ſit, cum id dictu ſciamus difficile, et ob immanem crudelitatem fortaſſis incredibile.

NOTE [M,] p. 340.

HENRY, by the feudal cuſtoms, was intitled to levy a tax for the marrying of his eldeſt daughter, and he exacted three ſhillings a hyde on all England. H. Hunt. p. 379. Some hiſtorians (or Brady, p. 270. and Tyrrel, vol. ii. p. 182.) heedleſsly make this ſum amount to above 800,000 pounds of our preſent money: But it could not exceed 135,000. Five hydes, ſometimes leſs, made a knight's fee, of which there were about 60,000 in England, conſequently near 300,000 hydes; and at the rate of three ſhillings a hyde, the ſum would amount to 45,000 pounds, or 135,000 of our preſent money. See Rudborne, p. 257. In the Saxon times, there were only computed 243,600 hydes in England.

NOTE [N], p. 344.

THE legates *a latere*, as they were called, were a kind of delegates, who poſſeſſed the full power of the pope in all the provinces committed to their charge, and were very buſy in extending, as well as exerciſing it. They nominated to all vacant benefices, aſſembled ſynods, and were anxious to maintain eccleſiaſtical privileges, which never could be fully protected without incroachments on the civil power. If there was the leaſt concurrence or oppoſition, it was always ſuppoſed that the civil power was to give way: Every deed, which had the leaſt pretence of holding of any thing ſpiritual, as marriages, teſtaments, promiſſory oaths, were brought into the ſpiritual court, and could not be canvaſſed before a civil magiſtrate. Theſe were the eſtabliſhed laws of the church; and where a legate was ſent immediately from Rome, he was ſure

to

to maintain the papal claims with the utmoſt rigour: But it was an advantage to the king to have the archbiſhop of Canterbury appointed legate, becauſe the connexions of that prelate with the kingdom tended to moderate his meaſures.

NOTE [O], p. 377.

WILLIAM of Newbridge, p. 383. (who is copied by later hiſtorians) aſſerts, that Geoffrey had ſome title to the counties of Maine and Anjou. He pretends, that count Geoffrey, his father, had left him theſe dominions by a ſecret will, and had ordered that his body ſhould not be buried, till Henry ſhould ſwear to the obſervance of it, which he, ignorant of the contents, was induced to do. But beſides, that this ſtory is not very likely in itſelf, and ſavours of monkiſh fiction, it is found in no other ancient writer, and is contradicted by ſome of them, particularly the monk of Marmoutier, who had better opportunities than Newbridge of knowing the truth. See Vita Gauf. Duc. Norman. p. 103.

NOTE [P], p. 380.

THE ſum ſcarcely appears credible; as it would amount to much above half the rent of the whole land. Gervaſe is indeed a contemporary author; but churchmen are often guilty of ſtrange miſtakes of that nature, and are commonly but little acquainted with the public revenues. This ſum would make 540,000 pounds of our preſent money. The Norman Chronicle, p. 995. ſays, that Henry raiſed only 60 Angevin ſhillings on each knight's fee in his foreign dominions: This is only a fourth of the ſum which Gervaſe ſays he levied on England: An inequality noways probable. A nation may by degrees be brought to bear a tax of 15 ſhillings in the pound, but a ſudden and precarious tax can never be impoſed to that amount, without a very viſible neceſſity, eſpecially in an age ſo little accuſtomed to taxes. In the ſucceeding reign, the rent of a knight's fee was computed at four pounds a year. There were 60,000 knights fees in England.

NOTE [Q], p. 382.

FITZ-STEPHEN, p. 18. This conduct appears violent and arbitrary; but was ſuitable to the ſtrain of adminiſtration in thoſe days. His father, Geoffrey, though repreſented

ſented as a mild prince, ſet him an example of much greater violence. When Geoffrey was maſter of Normandy, the chapter of Seez preſumed, without his conſent, to proceed to the election of a biſhop; upon which he ordered all of them with the biſhop elect to be caſtrated, and made all their teſticles be brought him in a platter. Fitz-Steph. p. 44. In the war of Toulouſe, Henry laid a heavy and an arbitrary tax on all the churches within his dominions. See Epiſt. St. Thom. p. 232.

NOTE [R], p. 397.

I Follow here the narrative of Fitz-Stephens, who was ſecretary to Becket; though, no doubt, he may be ſuſpected of partiality towards his patron. Lord Lyttelton chuſes to follow the authority of a manuſcript letter, or rather manifeſto, of Folliot, biſhop of London, which is addreſſed to Becket himſelf, at the time when the biſhop appealed to the pope from the excommunication denounced againſt him by his primate. My reaſons, why I give the preference to Fitz-Stephens are, (1.) If the friendſhip of Fitz-Stephens might render him partial to Becket even after the death of that prelate, the declared enmity of the biſhop, muſt, during his lifetime, have rendered him more partial on the other ſide. (2.) The biſhop was moved by intereſt, as well as enmity, to calumniate Becket. He had himſelf to defend againſt the ſentence of excommunication, dreadful to all, more eſpecially to a prelate: And no more effectual means than to throw all the blame on his adverſary. (3.) He has actually been guilty of palpable calumnies in that letter. Among theſe, I reckon the following: He affirms, that, when Becket ſubſcribed the Conſtitutions of Clarendon, he ſaid plainly to all the biſhops of England, *It is my maſter's pleaſure, that I ſhould forſwear myſelf, and at preſent I ſubmit to it, and do reſolve to incur a perjury, and repent afterwards as I may.* However barbarous the times, and however negligent zealous churchmen were then of morality, theſe are not words which a primate of great ſenſe and of much ſeeming ſanctity would employ in an aſſembly of his ſuffragans: He might act upon theſe principles, but never ſurely would publickly avow them. Folliot alſo ſays, that all the biſhops were reſolved obſtinately to oppoſe the Conſtitutions of Clarendon, but the primate himſelf betrayed them

them from timidity, and led the way to their ſubſcribing. This is contrary to the teſtimony of all the hiſtorians, and directly contrary to Becket's character, who ſurely was not deſtitute either of courage or of zeal for eccleſiaſtical immunities. (4.) The violence and injuſtice of Henry, aſcribed to him by Fitz-Stephens, is of a piece with the reſt of the proſecution. Nothing could be more iniquitous, than, after two years ſilence, to make a ſudden and unprepared demand upon Becket to the amount of 44,000 marks (equal to a ſum of near a million in our time) and not allow him the leaſt interval to bring in his accounts. If the king was ſo palpably oppreſſive in one article, he may be preſumed to be equally ſo in the reſt. (5.) Though Folliot's letter, or rather manifeſto, be addreſſed to Becket himſelf, it does not acquire more authority on that account. We know not what anſwer was made by Becket: The collection of letters cannot be ſuppoſed quite complete. But that the collection was not made by one (whoever he was) very partial to that primate, appears from the tenor of them, where there are many paſſages very little favourable to him: Inſomuch that the editor of them at Bruſſels, a Jeſuit, thought proper to publiſh them with great omiſſions, particularly of this letter of Folliot's. Perhaps, Becket made no anſwer at all, as not deigning to write to an excommunicated perſon, whoſe very commerce would contaminate him; and the biſhop, truſting to this arrogance of his primate, might calumniate him the more freely. (6.) Though the ſentence, pronounced on Becket by the great council, implies, that he had refuſed to make any anſwer to the king's court, this does not fortify the narrative of Folliot. For if his excuſe was rejected as falſe and frivolous, it would be treated as no anſwer. Becket ſubmitted ſo far to the ſentence of confiſcation of goods and chattels, that he gave ſurety, which is a proof, that he meant not at that time to queſtion the authority of the king's courts. (7.) It may be worth obſerving, that both the author of Hiſtoria quadripartita, and Gervaſe, contemporary writers, agree with Fitz-Stephens; and the latter is not uſually very partial to Becket. All the ancient hiſtorians give the ſame account.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.